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FREE

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2010

ISSUE ANALYSIS:

Would You Participate in a Demonstration?

By Frank Pizzoli

You go to Pride. Maybe you march in a gay parade. You write a check to an organization fighting for your civil rights. Would you participate in a demonstration?

Are the "times a changin'" in 2010 for gay people as Bob Dylan sang in the change-making 60s?

"We'll be making some new noise in the old ways," Clinton White House insider David Mixner told Central Voice last March. With AIDS Quilt founder Cleve Jones, he set into motion the Oct. 11, 2009 National Equality March.

Mixner is hearing some noise.

University of Rhode Island's GLBT Center and Gay-Straight Alliance recently staged a sit-in. Protest organizers hoped the "non-violent, direct action" would spur administrators to "take immediate steps to ensure the safety and inclusion of lgbt students, faculty and staff."

"We have had students throwing used condoms into students' rooms, drawing offensive images on people's doors, and an epidemic of people yelling 'faggots' as they drive by the GLBT Center," said junior Brian Stack. Sophomore Justin Willner said the campus atmosphere "makes it clear I am second rate and my well being is not valued."

Launched about six months ago, GetEqual.org, is making some of the

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Intelligence Reports Note Gay Events

By Frank Pizzoli

Central PA Pride Festival, Reading Pride, and Lancaster County rallies opposing shut down of the Human Relations Commission are events listed in intelligence bulletins released by The Pennsylvania Office of Homeland Security.

Prepared under a $103,000 now-expired state contract, the reports were assembled by the Institute of Terrorism Research and Response. They first became controversial when media outlets reported the Institute had been tracking anti-drilling activities of the Luzerne County Gas Drilling Awareness Coalition.

Contending its free speech rights were violated, the gas coalition filed a federal lawsuit seeking $125,000 in damages against state former Homeland Security Director James Powers and the Institute over the environmental group's inclusion in the reports sent to law enforcement and Marcellus Shale drillers. Powers resigned as of Oct. 8, a move not requested by Gov. Ed Rendell.

Gas coalition president Dr. Thomas Jiunta told Central Voice "The coalition feels the recent contracted spying and reporting by Pennsylvania's Office of Homeland Security on the coalition and subsequent dissemination of our activities to gas companies confirms the power of the gas industry to unduly influence our state government." Jiunta said that as a requirement of participation coalition members are held to code of conduct "that insists all members conduct their

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AIDS not over

The south central Pennsylvania region ranks second in the state in HIV cases, according to Centers for Disease Control 2009 data.

Of the seven counties served by The AIDS Fund of South Central Pennsylvania, three are in the top 10 high incidence counties across the state. The AIDS Fund serves Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lebanon, Perry, Lancaster and York counties.

"Clearly AIDS is not over in our region or anywhere," said David Leas, a community volunteer who chairs the AIDS Fund. To counter the erroneous perception that "AIDS is over," the local AIDS Fund gathers annually at a luncheon to honor an individual and organization that have successfully lead the effort to educate the public.

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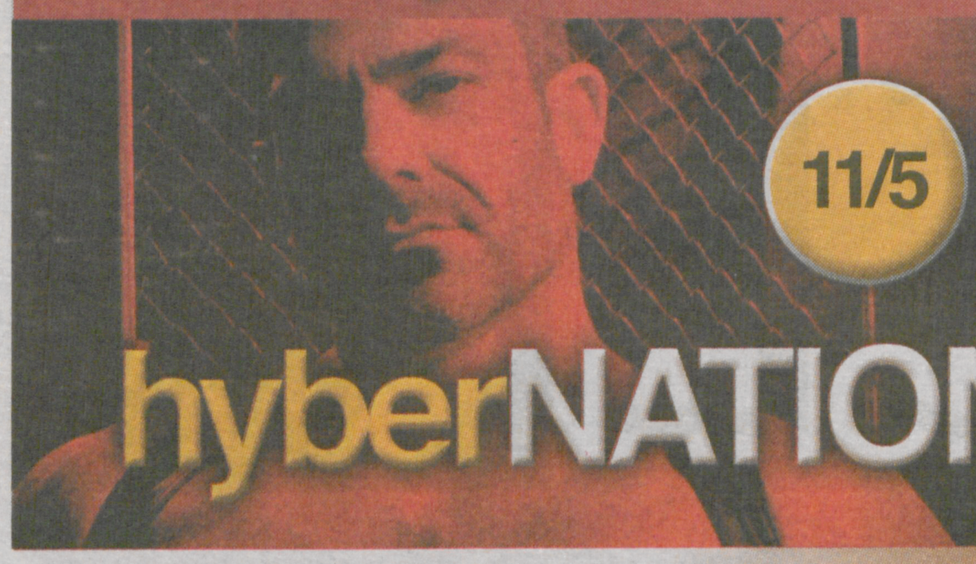
MORE:

World AIDS Day Luncheon Dec. 2

see p. 33

Special Events Coming Up at Club XS



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11/5

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11/13

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11/24

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Guest DJ Seth Gold • Nite Camp Elves

12/25

We can all use a drink (or three) after a day with the family.

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Food buffet • Champagne Toast at midnight

12/31

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Do Lack of Bullying Standards Create Unsafe Schools?

By Frank Pizzoli

"I believed that I did not deserve to live," Pennsylvania native Joey Kemmerling told CNN's Anderson Cooper when he explored the recent spate of suicides by high school and college age students who were bullied for being gay.

"I came out of the closet as gay in eighth grade and ever since I've been bullied. I was, for lack of a better word, and still am, the school faggot," the 16-year-old Kemmerling told Cooper.

Kemmerling said his decision to come out to classmates not only evoked a firestorm of vicious taunts but also led to a threat on his life. "There was a point where a kid had a knife on school premises and said, 'I'm going to kill him. I want that faggot dead.' And I had to transfer schools," he said.

From July 9 until press time, there were 10 reported incidents: eight suicides, two broken arms and one ally punched in the face. (See "Will This List Grow?)

Last issue (Sept-Oct 2010), Jenn DeWalt, a special education para-educator at Hempfield High School told Central Voice readers "When a student doesn't feel safe or feel self-worth, they don't learn."

Charles Robbins, of lgbt-youth suicide prevention program The Trevor Project, said while school districts may have anti-harassment and anti-bullying policies, the policies often do not specifically protect youth from harassment due to real or perceived sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression.

Ignoring the problem makes it worse.

"The mistreatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students is worse today than many might realize, and far too often involves school personnel that ignore the problem and in some cases make the situation even worse," said Stuart Biegel, co-author of a recent report by the National Education Policy Center formally released through the National Education Association.

Additional new research published this month in Developmental Psychology finds that lgbt youth who do not conform to societal gender norms have compromised mental health that is clearly linked to the bullying and harassment they receive in school. The study calls for schools to take action to address the bullying, violence, and social isolation that gender-nonconforming lgbt youth face, including student and faculty programs, support for gay-straight alliances, and robust nondiscrimination policies.

"Last October 11, lgbt people everywhere celebrated National Coming Out Day. But this year, it was hard to imagine such a day with a more somber prelude. Coming on the heels of a September that saw the suicides of five students from across the country, all largely due to the pain caused by anti-gay bullying and harassment, Equality Pennsylvania simply wants to know what will move lawmakers to take this issue seriously and enact a law with teeth?" asked Ted Martin, EP executive director

> **"I believed that I did not deserve to live," *Pennsylvania native Joey Kemmerling***

Although about half of the states have bullying policy standards, only eleven states in the country offer fully inclusive anti-harassment and anti-bullying education policies.

In January 2009 Pennsylvania required school districts to have bullying policies when House Bill 1067 went into effect, although the regulatory requirement to have an anti-bullying policy does not also require that the policy specifically make mention of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression.

Enter The Center for Safe Schools, a local entity.

The Center for Safe Schools and the Pennsylvania Department of Education, with Highmark Foundation funding, offer a program called PA CARES (Creating an Atmosphere of Respect and Environment for Success). Schools can receive technical assistance, materials and limited grant funds. "We've had involvement with about 300 schools and have an annual conference that draws about 900 people, according to the center's Lynn Cromley. "We can't ignore the behavior we want to extinguish," Cromley advises. The center provides ways for professional staff to set the tone within a school setting.

DeWalt sets the tone at Hempfield High School where she is a non-faculty advisor for their Gay/Straight Alliance.

Asher Brown, 13, 8th-grader at Hamilton Middle School, Houston, Texas, died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound in September. Parents said Asher had endured constant harassment from students at his middle school.

"As a 1990 graduate of Hempfield High School, I was very excited that a Gay/Straight Alliance existed. I thought about how happy I would have been to have one here when I was in school," DeWalt says. The alliance is now four years old with more than 30 members.

Locally, Louis Marven, responsible for youth programming at Common Roads, affiliated with the LGBT Community Center, said having anti-discrimination policies that include sexual orientation, gender identity and expression is critical. "It is the school's duty to go beyond having language in place. Schools need to actually implement these policies by making sure that staff members are trained to create safe spaces for lgbt youth," he said. "It is essential to hold a critical eye to current school and district practices."

Marven tries to make sure lgbt inclusive language actually makes it onto school districts' websites and student handbooks. "We have found several instances of inclusive policies made at a local level that have been inadequately communicated to the school community that should be enforcing and adhering to it."

Harrisburg area community leaders are collaborating on an anti-bullying initiative in the Harrisburg School District. District representatives, Marven, YWCA, Institute for Cultural Partnerships, Keystone Human Services, and the City of Harrisburg, are lead by Rev. Monica Dawkins-Smith to address the epidemic of bullying in the district. The group is planning a series of programs for students, faculty, staff, and parents. "Our goal is leave sustainable systems in place for individual schools to continue the work of stopping bullying," Marven said.

A first-ever report says college campuses do not earn high grades on bullying.

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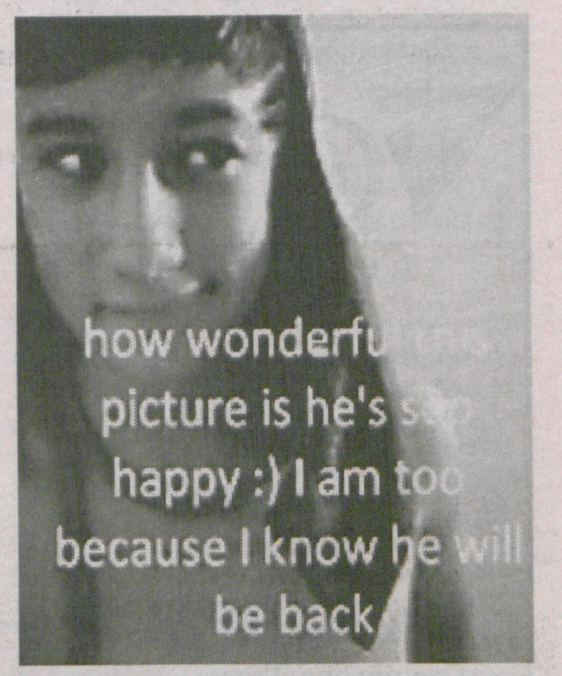


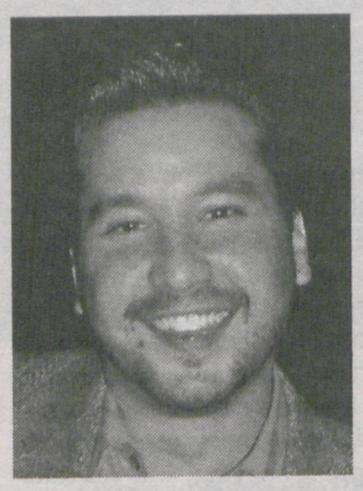
Seth Walsh, 13, Bakersfield, Calif. died Sept. 28 after nine days on life support after hanging himself from a tree in his backyard.

Will this list grow?

1. Justin Aaberg, 15, of Anoka, MN, was found dead in his room on July 9 after he hanged himself. Friends said he had been bullied because he was gay.
2. Cody Barker, 17, took his life in Shiocton, Wisconsin on Sept. 13.
3. Seth Walsh, 13, of Bakersfield, Calif. died Sept. 28 after nine days on life support after hanging himself from a tree in his backyard.
4. Raymond Chase hung himself in his dorm room Sept. 29, on the campus of Johnson & Wales in Providence, Rhode Island.
5. 18 year old Alec Henrikson, a student at Earlham College (Utah), was found dead on September 30.
6. Asher Brown, 13, eighth-grader at Hamilton Middle School in Houston, Texas, died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound in September. Parents said Asher had endured constant harassment from students at his middle school.
7. Tyler Clementi, 18, a Rutgers University student, jumped to his death after his roommate secretly filmed him during a "sexual encounter" with another male in his dorm room. Unbeknownst to Tyler, the encounter was streamed live on the internet.
8. William "Billy" Lucas, 15, a student at Greensburg Community High School in Greensburg, IN, was found dead in a barn at his grandmother's home after hanging himself. Friend and classmate Nick Hughes said that he had been tormented for years with accusations of being gay.
9. Tyler Wilson of Findlay, Ohio, eleven year-old whose arm was broken by two boys after Tyler joined the cheering team.
10. A female Univ. of Wisconsin student wearing a shirt that read "Legalize Gay" was called a "faggot" and punched in the face by one of two unknown male assailants who then fled.

guest writer

Be Out, Don't Opt Out



By Tony Plakas

It might have been easy for me to skip my 20-year high school reunion last month in Spring Grove, Pa., or to leave my partner of 13 years behind and go by myself. It isn't that I don't care about the people I grew up with between elementary and high school. Sometimes, it's just easier to opt out than to go to the trouble to be out.

If you haven't noticed, simply participating in an authentic moment along with a same-sex partner is an act of activism lately, especially in more rural areas of our country. Reunions, holidays, marriages and funerals - the most meaningful of occasions where you want to be with your significant other - inevitably involves crossing paths with people from your past, many of whom may have anticipated a different life for you. So, why go through all the trouble?

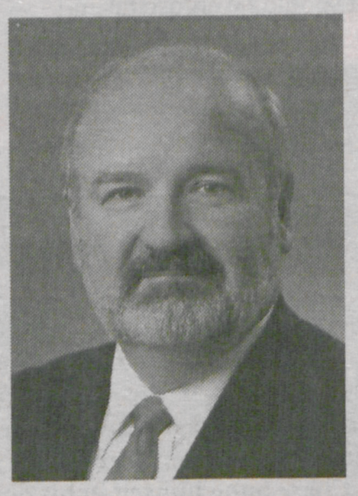
But then our country quickly learned of Tyler Clementi, the New Jersey college student who took his own life after being outed through the Internet by his roommate. The terrible story reminded me how very vulnerable I allowed myself to be 15 years ago when I simply let go of all the people, places and shared experiences that tethered me to a life worth living. Like Tyler Clementi, I might well have been jumping off a bridge when I ran from the safety net of family and friends to be alone because I didn't want to shame them. But Tyler won't have that problem anymore, and he won't have to wonder whether or not it's worth the trouble to go to his 20-year high school reunion.

As schools across the country prepared for homecomings and high school reunions last month, September 2010 became infamous for troubled youth confronting issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity — and flat-out damning for school administrators who have been aware of the impact of harassment and bullying on young people. Six teenagers, ranging in age from 13 to 19, committed suicide due to harassment and bullying because they were gay or perceived to be gay: Billy Lucas from Indiana, Justin Aaberg from Minnesota, Seth Walsh from California, Tyler Clementi from New Jersey, Asher Brown from Texas, and Raymond Chase from Rhode Island. It's hard to imagine how our leaders can ignore that this is a federal issue.

No one ever bullied me to the point where I thought life was not worth living, but running a center established as a safe place for youth who may consider themselves anything other than straight makes you realize how important today's subtle acts of activism are for the future health and well-being of our children. As adults, it is important not to opt out, because we have to pave the way for future generations to show them that every life is worth living. As Dan Savage's Anti-Bullying Internet Campaign aimed at youth says: "It gets better." Our kids just need our life's examples to believe it.

Guest writer Tony Plakas is formerly from Spring Grove, Pa. and is currently CEO of Compass, the largest gay and lesbian community center in the Southeast US and a columnist for the South Florida Sun-Sentinel, a Tribune Publishing Company. He currently resides in Palm Beach, Florida with his partner of 13 years, and can be reached at HomeRule@post.harvard.edu. Reprinted by permission.

Forced-Merger Bills Slap Founding Fathers



By David M. Sanko
Pa. State Association of Township Supervisors

Today, as a township or borough resident, you can go to a municipal meeting, speak out about what's right and wrong, and have a real and lasting impact on what happens in your community.

Tomorrow, however, that might not be the case. And the sad thing is, many Pennsylvanians aren't aware that something they value, and possibly take for granted, could be snatched away. And that's their right to be heard, loud and clear, by their local elected leaders.

State lawmakers recently held hearings on two serious threats to our democratic way of life, House Bill 2431 and Senate Bill 1357, which would radically reshape our commonwealth by snuffing out townships and boroughs.

The most onerous measure, House Bill 2431, is nothing short of a slap in the face to our Founding Fathers. Proposed by Rep. Thomas Caltagirone of Berks County, the bill would make Pennsylvania's community-based system of governing unconstitutional — unconstitutional! — and replace it with something he says is better: an out-of-sight mega-bureaucracy overseen by the county.

In protest, supervisors in hundreds of townships have rallied and passed resolutions that oppose the bills.

Despite this grassroots uprising — isn't that what America is all about? — Caltagirone and his fellow "do-gooders" continue to stand firm on their bigger-is-better platform, a house of cards built on whimsy, not fact, and claim they know what is best for Pennsylvania.

Their argument hinges on the debatable premise that the commonwealth should follow the lead of a handful of other states, bulldoze its patchwork of "inefficient" and "redundant" municipalities, and create a landscape of bigger, supposedly more efficient governments.

But we don't have to look beyond our borders for examples of the bigger-government model. We've got them right here in Pennsylvania. Look at places like Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Reading, and Allentown. They're larger, for sure, but are they more efficient? More responsive? More affordable?

Not by a long shot.

But if you're searching for an example of a better-government model, look

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voice box

It's surreal.

13 Republican members of Congress gather at Tart Lumber Co. to unveil "Pledge to America," a government reform plan. "Tart?" "Republicans?" and the GOP's busload of anti-gay "in the closet" buddies. I guess that's some hard wood you got their, huh guys?

A reader

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Prison Reform: The Fallacy of "Not in My Backyard"

By James P. Bond, M.D.

Pennsylvania's prisons are overcrowded with inmates who should not be there! Where should they be? In our backyards.

Twenty seven states have decreased their prison population. In contrast, this year, 2010, Pa. already has sent over 2,000 inmates to other state prisons. To do this Pa. will pay approximately $42 million a year to Michigan and Virginia to house the overflow of our prisons. Michigan has 3260 fewer inmates than three years ago thus allowing them to close 8 prisons.

In 1996, Virginia began diverting low-risk offenders from prison to community sanctions. Now only 20% of Virginia's inmates are in prison for non-violent offenses. Michigan has adopted similar reforms.

Pa. is building 4 new prisons, (one in 2010 is a replacement for an obsolete prison), at an estimated cost of over 3/4 of a Billion Dollars. It costs an average of $35,000 to incarcerate one individual for one year versus a few thousand dollars for a non-prison program. Last year Pa. spent 1.75 billion dollars operating 27 state prisons. This does not include spending for almost 60 county prisons.

Pa. has the second longest sentences for non-violent crimes. These mandatory minimum sentences have stripped discretion from judges, the majority of whom have argued they are not an effective deterrent. A three year study by district attorneys, legislators, and judges uncovered a number of "unintended consequences" of mandatory minimum sentences.

Pa. Dept. of Corrections Secretary, Jeffrey Beard, recently retired, has stated that our prisons are "exploding with non-violent offenders, including low level drug users, drunk drivers, parole violators, and shop lifters." The National Drug Court Institute found that non-incarceration programs for non-violent drug offenders consisting of treatment, education, rigorous supervision, and accountability resulted in almost a fourfold greater success rate over imprisonment alone.

Years ago, most mental health hospitals were closed. Today a seriously mentally ill person is three times more likely to be incarcerated than hospitalized in the U. S. "All they have to do is step over the line, public urination, to land in jail." Low cost treatment centers in Pa. could monitor schizophrenic, bipolar and other mental patients and to make sure they take their medications.

Republican State Senator Stewart Greenleaf, Chair of the Judiciary Committee, author of some of the tough on crime legislation of the 80's and 90's now emphasizes the over crowding due to technical parole violations, too long sentences for non-violent crimes, etc. He has seven bills pending to correct the unintended consequences of the tough on crime legislation. Many corrective measures have bipartisan support. If your legislator seems reluctant to endorse reforms, ask him or her, to travel to Michigan, Virginia, or New York where such reforms are in place at no adverse impact on public safety. Half-way Houses, Electronic Monitoring Systems, Education, and Job Training all need citizen support.

There are 450 individuals sentenced as juveniles in Pa. to life without parole, (to die in jail), a number more than any other state. On a National level twenty-six percent of these were convicted as children because a co-defendant committed murder. Some of these "children" have been incarcerated for decades in Pa. at a cost of millions.

Consider employing ex-offenders and get a tax break through the Second Chance Act. Show compassion and provide leadership for this critical issue.

Of utmost importance is to release on parole or monitored program those who do not belong in jail. Support the building of more Halfway Houses and the use of Electronic Monitoring Systems, which will not only cost much less, the results are far better.

This essay deals mainly with non-violent inmates. The facts are well documented. The only opinions are two-fold: (1) to encourage citizen support for incarceration reforms demonstrated to be successful in other states and (2) to encourage the Legislature to expedite their efforts with pending laws to undo the mistakes they have found in the previous legislation on incarcerations.

Such reforms will provide a just, effective, and humane criminal justices system and surprisingly save money in the long run which may be used for education, road and bridge repair.

James P. Bond, M.D., is a retired oncologist, hematologist who recently worked on environmental issues. For the past four years, he has been impressed and influenced by the incredible work of the Pennsylvania Prison Society which was started more than 200 years ago by Benjamin Franklin, Benjamin Rush and others.

letters to the editor

Strike

The story on "The Strike Outs," our bowling team (Sept-Oct 2010) was wonderful. More than we could've hoped for. We've grown by three whole teams this year! That's well more than we anticipated.

Bobby Binko

Progressive

I recently read through an issue of Central Voice and really found everything so well put together. The publication is very impressive and progressive!

Leah B.

Former RNC Chairman Ken Mehlman Comes Out

Log Cabin Republicans issued the following statement regarding former RNC Chairman Ken Mehlman's disclosure of his sexual orientation:

"Log Cabin Republicans is very supportive and appreciative of Ken's coming out. Being gay and being conservative are not mutually exclusive," said Log Cabin Republicans Executive Director R. Clarke Cooper.

"As a fellow Bush alumnus, I look forward to Ken helping me and our colleagues build a stronger and more inclusive Republican Party. Nothing presents a better argument for the equality of gay and lesbian citizens than the reality of our lives as responsible members of society. I am happy that Ken has come to a place where he can take a stand with integrity, and I welcome him as yet another conservative, common-sense voice to join with Log Cabin Republicans and all Americans in this important dialogue."

"The process of coming out, and certainly coming out in the public eye, is never an easy one, but I am glad that Ken has decided to take this step and am glad that he is doing so on behalf of the fight for equality," said former Republican Congressman Jim Kolbe. "As somebody who took my own journey and came out later in life, I have a great deal of respect for him doing this on his own terms. Ken joins a chorus that includes Laura Bush, Dick Cheney, Ted Olson, and countless others advocating for the American value of inclusion.

This is not a time for playing politics; it is a time for us all to join together--Republicans and Democrats--to repeal the failed 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policy, to pass workplace non-discrimination, and to recognize all committed relationships. The responsibility for making this happen lies with the Democratic leadership in Congress and in the White House who set the legislative agenda."

Forced-Merger con'td

no farther than the nearest township. There, you'll find hardworking, fiscally responsible men and women who work together, do more with less, and are frugal with tax dollars. They're also deeply committed to preserving Pennsylvania's long-standing tradition of government "of the people, by the people, and for the people" in an age where big boxes (think Home Depot) rule.

But are big boxes the solution? Maybe for grocery stores and discount retailers, but not for government, where hands-on, within-reach leadership — the vision of William Penn and our nation's founding fathers — still makes as much sense today as it did hundreds of years ago.

Of course, critics will say that township supervisors are protesting the likes of House Bill 2431 because they want to preserve their jobs and power. But self-preservation is not their motivation.

Townships, instead, are determined to protect something they know their residents hold sacred, and that's their fundamental right to govern themselves locally.

Why, I ask, would anyone want it any other way?

Animal Farm Redux

By Lowman S. Henry

In George Orwell's 1945 classic Animal Farm, the humans running the farm are displaced in an uprising by the animals who take charge. As time progresses, the revolutionary leaders become corrupted by power and morph into new versions of the people they displaced. That is an apt description of the Pennsylvania senate. In this case though, the animals who took charge and then lost their way are RINOs (Republicans in Name Only.)

Four years ago, on the heels of the infamous middle-of-the-night pay jacking, Republican primary voters ousted the top ranking members of the senate; President Pro Tempore Robert Jubelirer and Majority Leader Chip Brightbill. Never in the history of Penn's Woods had both leaders been defeated at the polls in the same election.

Republican voters did this because the senate leadership had lost its way. Like GOP leaders in Washington, Jubelirer and Brightbill became big spending, big government liberals who failed to reflect the core principles of their party. Voters reacted by tossing them from office, electing in their districts two stalwart conservatives.

On the leadership level, Senator Joseph Scarnati of Jefferson County and Senator Domenic Pileggi of Delaware County were respectively elected President Pro Tempore and Majority Leader. Unfortunately, over the course of the last four years, they have also drifted from their party's core principles and are currently advancing an agenda so liberal Barack Obama, Harry Reid and Nancy Pelosi would be proud.

Among the leftist legislation pushed by Scarnati and Pileggi:

• A bill that would increase the number of "jackpot juries" in Pennsylvania by allowing trial lawyers to suggest to jurors at closing the amount of damages that should be awarded. Such a change would prejudice the jury toward a guilty verdict and fix an amount for damages in their minds. After a furious lobbying campaign by business, taxpayer and TEA party organizations the bill was pulled from the agenda.

• The so-called "Sub-Contractor Extinction Act" passed with the amazing support of 14 Republican senators who voted to make it next to impossible for the 85% of Pennsylvanian workers who choose not to join a union to get work on major projects. The legislation will dramatically increase the cost of construction. It also was a sop to the labor unions, who contribute heavily to Pileggi's campaigns.

• Having climbed into bed with trial lawyers and labor unions, the senate's Republican leadership also wants to have a dalliance with the radical environmental movement. Scarnati and Pileggi plan to bring to a vote a bill which would increase the percentage of solar power which must be purchased by Pennsylvania electric companies. Pennsylvania Power & Light alone estimates that will increase its generation costs by $200 million per year. Consumers will pay in the end with significantly higher electric bills.

• Senate leadership has pledged to enact a severance tax on gas pumped from the Marcellus Shale reserves. The tax was agreed to in the budget deal struck with Governor Ed Rendell last summer. Proponents of the tax claim Pennsylvania is the only state without a severance levy. What they fail to say is that Pennsylvania is the only state in the nation that imposes both a Corporate Net Income Tax and a Capital Stock and Franchise Tax on companies. A severance tax would have a chilling effect on one of the few industries in Pennsylvania that is actually growing.

• Stuck it to citizens who want to obtain documents from state, county and local governments by watering down the Right-to-Know law. The Pennsylvania Newspaper Association opposed the legislation because it narrowed the scope of the law and will also allow governments to place onerous per page copying fees on information requested.

• Scarnati and Pileggi are pushing for the creation of a legislative fiscal office. This new bureaucracy would cost taxpayers tens of millions of dollars to provide budget information to lawmakers who already employ sizably staffs on their appropriations committees.

And, let us not forget that it was the Senate Republican caucus that has partnered with Governor Ed Rendell in passing state budgets with unaffordable levels of spending and massive debt that has created a fiscal mess of historic proportions.

Pennsylvania's Republican-controlled senate has become indistinguishable from the Democrats. In true Orwellian style the animals have morphed into the humans - and the result is a government that steals personal freedom and economic liberty from the governed.

The Declaration of Independence established that liberty as a God-given right. It also says that: " . . . whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government."

That time has come once again.

Lowman S. Henry is Chairman & CEO of the Lincoln Institute and host of the weekly Lincoln Radio Journal. lhenry@lincolninstitute.org.

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Pigeon Shoots: Wrong as a Kid, Wrong 50 Years Later

By W. Scott Yoder
Humane Society of Berks County Board of Directors

As a child in Berks County with the last name of Yoder I was introduced to all the "traditions" and "heritage' items at a very young age: Shoo-fly Pie, Pig Stomach, Schnitz und Knepp, AP Cake, Montgomery Pie, Milk Tarts, Liver Pudding, Hunting, Local Gun Club Memberships, and Pigeon Shoots; the list is endless. Of the before mentioned items the one I'd really like to focus on today is Pigeon Shoots.

Before leaving to go home, we would always go closer to the "traps" and watch the men shoot the pigeons from behind.

I seemed to get dragged along to every Pigeon Shoot that was held in many more venues than today (and in those days, there was public notice given instead of the modern "secret society" notification that must currently exist), by family members and friends' fathers who, by the way, were all trying very hard to teach me how to become an ethical hunter. My job was to stand out in "center field" and shoot at "sleepers", aptly named because these were the poor pigeons that were half-dead, flying low at a slow rate of speed, and easy targets for a kid of 9 or 10 years old.

As a hunter, gun owner, and animal advocate, I realize that it's time for Pennsylvania's National Embarrassment of protecting and defending these distasteful, depressing, horrific spectacles, to come to an end and come to an end NOW!

Before leaving to go home, we would always go closer to the "traps" and watch the men shoot the pigeons from behind. This was where this Pigeon Shooting Tradition started to go south for me in a hurry. I watched the birds for the next round being carried in, packed like sardines, in wooden crates. I watched the young kids or "wringers", whose job it was to pick up the dead or wounded birds inside the ring and dispatch them by wringing their necks before throwing them into a 55-gallon barrel, before being dumped into a dumpster, while the wounded birds lying outside of the ring were just left there to flop around and die of their own accord.

All of a sudden the mixed message thing started to go off in my very young brain about what my father and grandfather were trying to teach me about becoming an ethical hunter: dispatching of harvested game quickly and then preparing it, before doing anything else, for the table. Dumping these dead birds into a dumpster ran antithetically to what my young mind was trying to learn. The short trip home gave me more time to "process" all this and I spent many sleepless nights mulling this over in my brain. The final straw for me was going for Sunday breakfast at one of these clubs, the day after the shoot, and watching the wounded birds from the day before hopping pathetically around the parking lot, and looking up to the roof of the Gun Club, where many half-dead birds were perched waiting for certain death, or if they were lucky, to get picked off by a passing hawk.

As a hunter, gun owner, and animal advocate, I realize that it's time for Pennsylvania's National Embarrassment of protecting and defending these distasteful, depressing, horrific spectacles, to come to an end and come to an end NOW! The NRA, and I'm a member, has even backed off the "Pigeon Shoot Question" because they don't want to be associated, in my opinion, with a certain loser and I believe even they're beginning to realize that banning pigeon shoots has nothing to do with 2nd amendment rights. As a Sportsman and gun owner the least of my fears is the banning of pigeon shoots, but that's another topic for another day.

I'm going to continue eating Schnitz und Knepp and Shoo-Fly Pies, as long as my doctor allows it, but the one tradition that needs to get thrown into the dumpster is the protection of pigeon shoots by our law-makers in Harrisburg. I'd encourage everyone who feels as I do to contact their representatives and encourage them to support and bring this Pigeon Shoot and Tethered Turkey Shoot Ban Bill up for a vote as soon as possible so we can all sleep a little better at night and carry on with traditions that still work in the 21st Century.

Black & White Party Moves to Harrisburg

Described as "the best benefit party you'll ever attend," The Black & White Party moves to the Zembo Shrine Event Center and Auditorium in Harrisburg on May 14, 2011.

The Black and White Party, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that raises funds to support HIV/AIDS services in the region. Increasingly, public funding is insufficient to meet the HIV-related education, prevention, and medical needs of people in the region. Money raised through the event helps ensure these services remain available.

Proceeds from the Black and White Party will be donated to Family First Health's Caring Together HIV/AIDS program which provides services to over 525 HIV positive people in York and Adams Counties, and the AIDS Fund of South Central Pennsylvania, which provides grants to support HIV-related services throughout the region. Each of these organizations holds 501(c)3. The AIDS Fund is the only Pennsylvania-based fund affiliated with the National AIDS Fund which matches every $2 raised by the benefit with another $1.

In the past four years, the event has raised over $70,000 and hopes to exceed the $100,000 mark after the 2011 event. The event is run by over 150 volunteers, who produce an event which is unparalleled in South Central Pennsylvania. More than 1,000 people each year enjoy live entertainment, silent and live auctions, food from local restaurants, and a theme party that is produced by many dozens of community theatre volunteers.

Charles King, until recently Club XS manager, founded the event. "The event exists because of Club XS whose owner Joel Weinstein challenged me when we first opened to produce a community-based event. That's our origin. Our moving is based on the success Club XS enabled us to achieve by originally hosting the event," King explained. Historically, the event has drawn people from York, Harrisburg, Lancaster, Phila., and Baltimore.

Contact: Charles King, 717-814-8862, c.king@theblackandwhiteparty.com or www.theblackandwhiteparty.com.

Black and White Party Benefit Needs Singers, Dancers

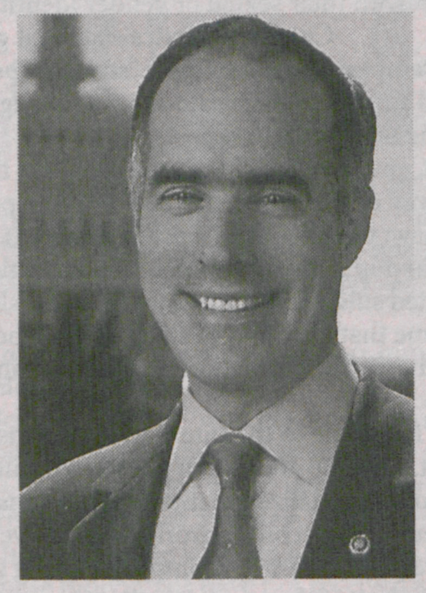
The 5th Annual Black and White Party, May 14, 2011 needs singers and dancers. The fundraising event which benefits The AIDS Fund of South Central PA and York's Family First HIV Program will be held at Harrisburg's Zembo Shrine. Interested in auditioning? Send an email to THEchadalan.Carr@gmail.com (Chad-Alan Carr)

Anti-bullying Bills Introduced

US Sen. Robert Casey (D-Pa.) recently introduced a federal anti-bullying bill with 10 co-sponsors. The bill would require enumerated anti-bullying policies in public schools.

Pa. State Representative Rick Taylor (D-Montgomery) has also introduced similar legislation in the House of Representatives.

(See "Do Lack of Bullying Standards Create Unsafe Schools?" page 3.)



Casey's Safe Schools Improvement Act will require comprehensive anti-bullying policies in our nation's public schools. The bill was introduced in the House last year by Rep. Linda Sánchez and has 119 bipartisan cosponsors.

"Bullying and harassment affect millions of students every year. While we do have federal laws to provide support to promote school safety, there is nothing currently in place to comprehensively and expressly address issues of bullying or harassment," Casey said. "I am pleased to introduce the Safe Schools Improvement Act to help ensure that every child receives a quality education that builds self-confidence. This bill is a crucial step towards ensuring that no child is so afraid to go to school that he or she stays home for fear of bullying."

"Bullying is a national public health crisis that demands a national solution," said mother Sirdeaner Walker, whose 11-year-old son Carl Joseph Walker-Hoover took his life in Springfield, Mass., last year after enduring constant bullying at school. "As a mother who knows the painful consequences of inaction, I urge Congress to pass the Safe Schools Improvement Act and give schools the tools they need to make their hallways and classrooms safer for all students."

Servicemembers United Action Fund Launched

Servicemembers United, the nation's largest organization of gay and lesbian troops and veterans, announced today that it has incorporated and launched a new 501c4 affiliated organization called the Servicemembers United Action Fund.

The new affiliate will take over and expand Servicemembers United's grassroots organizing work and will also develop and launch a series of web and television ads on the topic of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell", among other targeted activities.

"We are very excited and proud to be launching the first 501c4 affiliate organization dedicated to the 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' issue," said Alexander Nicholson, executive director of Servicemembers United and a former U.S. Army interrogator who was discharged under DADT. "This represents another big step forward for the gay military and veteran community and another weapon in our community's arsenal as we move into a critical period for the DADT issue."

Organizations that are organized under section 501c4 of the Internal Revenue Code are allowed to engage in unlimited lobbying activity, an important distinction. Servicemembers United, a 501c3 organization, will continue and expand its mission to educate the public about issues that impact gay and lesbian troops and veterans and to built a strong and vibrant gay military community for the post-DADT era.

HIV+ and Sexually Active?

Sexuality does not have to end with an HIV diagnosis. AIDS Community Alliance, a project of Alder Health Services, offers supportive educational programs to address the needs of men and women living with HIV.

- **Healthy Relationships**
  A five-part workshop that provides the tools to decrease the stress around disclosure to family, friends and sex partners.
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  - Safer Sex 101
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  - Positive/Negative Relationships
- **Individual and Couples Consultations**
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- **HIV Testing for Partners**

AIDS Community Alliance of South Central PA

AIDS Community Alliance is a project of Alder Health Services. All services are free and confidential. For more information about the program that is right for you, please call 1.800.867.1550.

www.ALDERHEALTH.org

transgender column

Lost Lives

By Jeanine Ruhsam
President, TransCentralPA

This entire country has been shocked into awareness of the grievous loss of youthful promised lives these past few weeks: five young Americans were driven to their deaths through bullying and harassment by others who had issues with their sexual or gender identity.

Current statistics state that gay and lesbian people are four times more likely to attempt suicide than their "straight" peers; thus, with the latter having a nationally reported suicide attempt rate at 1.6%, our lgb group posts a rate of 6.4% - an awful and quite sobering number.

In 2009 the National Center for Transgender Equality & the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force conducted a survey of the transgender-identifying population (which I took part in). To the question, "have you ever attempted suicide?" 41% of the respondents said "Yes". So: 1.6% of the general population, 6.4% of the lgb population, 41% of the transgender population have attempted suicide. It is too hard to even ask, how many have succeeded? One can only then assume that over half of all the transgender population has faced such insurmountable challenges, discrimination, harassment and marginalization that they choose not to live at all.

A candlelit ceremony in tribute to the International Transgender Day of Remembrance will take place on Sat., Nov. 20 at dusk on the steps of the Capital. The remembrance began with a vigil to memorialize the murder of a transgender woman in San Francisco in 1998. Since then it has become a world-wide movement to remember those transgender people that have been victimized simply for being gender diverse.

We now realize that the loss of these precious lives is not restricted to outright murder, but also to those driven to despair and suicide. We realize that lives are not just lost, but even more are ruined and so painful to cope with. And we realize that we must celebrate the great gift of life, and the magic of those that are born transgender and choose to bravely embrace the reality of living that life in the world.

TransCentralPA, Equality PA, the LGBT Community Center Coalition and other participants and sponsors ask you to come join us when we assemble beginning at 4 p.m. that afternoon to question, to understand, to raise awareness of and to celebrate the lives lost and present circumstances of our transgender family.

Update: Sergeant Newsome to Sue

Remember Jene Newsome? She was the Air Force Base sergeant who was outed to her superiors by Rapid City police officers. The former Harrisburg resident is preparing a lawsuit against the city. Central Voice spoke to Newsome last May.

Recap: In November 2009, Rapid City police served an out of state arrest warrant for Cheryl Hutson, Newsome's partner (the warrant was for a charge of grand theft). The sergeant was not part of the investigation or involved in her partner's case. However, police noticed an Iowa marriage license on the couple's kitchen table, a fact included in their report and shared with Newsome's military superiors. She was discharged in January 2010.

Police said the ex-sergeant allegedly wasn't very helpful their investigation. Listing the marriage certificate was important because it offered a reason why she didn't help them out. "Given the city of Rapid City's unwillingness to acknowledge the wrongful and unlawful acts done by Officer (Jeremy) Stauffacher, (Det. Tom) Garinger and other members of the police department, we have no choice but to file a lawsuit against the city of Rapid City in federal court," said Jeffrey Fransen, one of Newsome's lawyers.

York events

St. Nicholas Fayre
Medieval traders gather to sell their wares. Living history and unique gifts. Medieval storytelling on Nov. 27. Traditional wine and ale at the bar. From Nov. 25-28, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Barley Hall, 2 Coffee Yard, York, North Yorkshire.
Contact: www.barleyhall.org

"Fast from the Past: The Racing Motorcycles of Yesteryear"
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www.aacamuseum.org
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Historic Harrisburg Association, responsible for the management of Broad Street Market, recently entered a new phase of "profile building" with city and regional venues.

Trend: Violence against LGBT Youth in Detention

Nearly one out of every three youths at 13 juvenile detention facilities have reported some type of sexual victimization, according to a government study that found widespread reports of youth sex abuse at correctional centers.

Nationwide about 12 percent of youths held in state-run, privately run, or local facilities reported some type of sexual victimization, the Justice Department found in the first report of its kind. The rates varied widely between facilities.

The study identified six facilities where the survey found at least three out of every 10 inmates said they were sexually victimized while in custody: Pendleton Juvenile Correctional Facility in Indiana; Corsicana Residential Treatment Center in Texas; Backbone Mountain Youth Center in Swanton, Md.; Samarkand Youth Development Center in Eagle Springs, N.C.; Cresson Secure Treatment Unit in Pennsylvania; and the Culpeper Juvenile Correctional Center, Long Term, in Mitchells, Va.

Another seven sites reported nearly as high levels of sexual abuse or victimization: Victory Field Correctional Academy in Vernon, Texas; Indianapolis Juvenile Correctional Facility; Shawono Center in Grayling, Michigan; Woodland Hills Youth Development Center in Nashville, Tenn.; L.E. Rader Center in Sand Springs, Okla.; Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center in Virginia; New Jersey Training School in Monroe Township, N.J.

The numbers were far different than the records kept by many states. Officials in several states, including Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Tennessee, New Jersey and Maryland, said they had very few or no substantiated complaints of sexual abuse in recent years at the facilities named in the report.

SocialWorkersSpeak.org gathered social work experts to discuss addressing the problem.

"Yes, it's an ongoing problem. It's been a problem for decades," said social worker Caitlin Ryan, PhD, ACSW, director of the San Francisco State University Family Acceptance Project, an initiative that studies the impact of family acceptance and rejection on lgbt youth. "It really has not been addressed at the systemic level."

"Although there are wonderful guards and staff in every facility, there are some guards and staff with their own agendas and prejudices," said Robin McHaelen, MSW, a social worker and director of True Colors Inc. Sexual Minority Youth and Family Services in Hartford, CT.

"When a staff member calls a youth names or harasses them, or equally importantly fails to intervene when the youth is being harassed because of their orientation or gender, other youth learn that is acceptable behavior – it escalates from there."

Media coverage of sexual abuse of juveniles in detention picked up last January when the Justice Department released its first report ever on sexual abuse of youth in detention centers. That report said 12 percent of youth in state-run, privately run, or local facilities have been sexually victimized.

However, later reporting has focused on the fact that abuse of lgbt youth in detention occurs at a much higher rate. The Nation, the oldest US magazine, last June ran a story about violence against lgbt youth in the juvenile justice system. And the Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana last July released a report about mistreatment of lgbt youth in state facilities.

continued on page 13

Community Responders Network Launches

Formed to address intolerance, the Community Responders Network launched Sept. 12, 3 p.m. at an Interfaith Service in remembrance of 9/11. The service will be held at St. Stephen's Episcopal Cathedral, 221 North Front Street, Harrisburg.

The network will provide concerned citizens with guidance and procedures on how to deal with the immediate impact of intolerance.

Later this month on Sept. 21, Silent Witness Peacekeepers activist Alanna Berger, Rabbi Carl Choper, Margee Kooistra, and Rev. Jim Brown will accept the Jane Addams Peace Award from the YWCA of Greater Harrisburg for their work in bringing the group together.

The CRN originally started in response to the anti-Muslim DVD that began circulating during the 2008 election campaign. Berger, and others, was asked to join the network because of Silent Witness Peacekeepers philosophy of non-violent response to spiritual violence. Silent Witness is best known in the region for its participation in the annual Central PA Pride Festival.

During the network's planning stages, the group discussed possibly responding to physical attacks, graffiti, vandalism, KKK or other supremacist groups, as well as lgbt-related events. Recently, the network responded to the Aug. 13 appearance at the state capitol by the National Organization for Marriage. NOM opposes same-sex marriage.

"We want to them know they are not alone," Berger said in an email. "If necessary, we will make public statements denouncing the attacks and in support of the people or groups attacked." The network works closely with the Pennsylvania Human Relations commission Task Force on Civil Tension. "Our role would be to make sure the victims know where to get help," Berger said. The network will not take the place of police.

The rationale for forming the network addresses what Berger called "the lack of an effective way to speak out on behalf of members of our community who have been the targets of harassment, intolerance or hate.

The group's news release states that "whether African American, Jewish, Native American, or someone whose ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, or physical limitations sets them apart, there are those in our community who have been the victims of inhumane and even harmful treatment by others." The release notes that since 9/11, Muslims in this area and throughout the US have been subjected to increasing incidents of intolerance. "Frequently, these individuals have not received support from the larger community," the release said, continuing "The Community Responders Network was created out of this concern by a diverse group of religious and community leaders because in addition to Muslims, there are many other groups who are set apart and attacked. The network's intention is to support those who are victimized and to speak out with a moral voice to say: "Intolerance is unacceptable in our community".

Information: www.pacommunityresponders.org

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Bullying con't

The 2010 State of Higher Education for LGBT People report reveals "chilly" campus climates nationwide toward gay people, high harassment rates, lack of safety and inclusiveness in policies, reports national non-profit Campus Pride. Until now, there has never been a comprehensive national study to document what happens to gay youth who go to college.

Last September, University of Michigan's first openly gay student body president, Christopher Armstrong, sought a restraining order against Andrew Shrivell, a Michigan assistant state attorney general who has been publicly accusing Armstrong of pushing "a radical homosexual agenda". Shrivell has shown up at student assembly events protesting Armstrong with signs that have a rainbow with a swastika drawn on it.

Even with free speech rights, when openly hostile messages and behaviors that devalue the lives of young people are not responded to the message is negative. The Trevor Project's Robbins explains that "when youth are threatened or get into fights, or have property stolen at school, their risk of attempting suicide more than doubles."

Data released last month reflect Robbins' concern.

Last month, GLSEN, the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, released 10 years of research documenting lgbt student experiences upon release of "The 2009 National School Climate Survey" of 7,261 middle and high school students. Results show that nearly nine out of 10 lgbt students experienced harassment in the past year and nearly two-thirds felt unsafe because of their sexual orientation. Nearly a third of lgbt students skipped at least one day of school in the past month because of safety concerns.

"Only with an enforceable national standard that offers resources and support to educators and staff will we be able to prevent future tragedies," Robbins said.

Michigan State Univ. Student Assembly President Chris Armstrong (right, wearing red) is the target of Michigan Assistant Attorney General Andrew Shirvell at a protest over presentation of "The Laramie Project". Photo by Chris Dzombak

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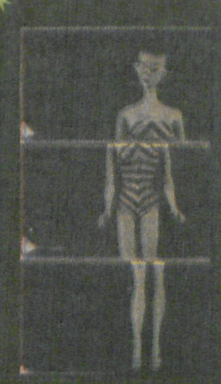

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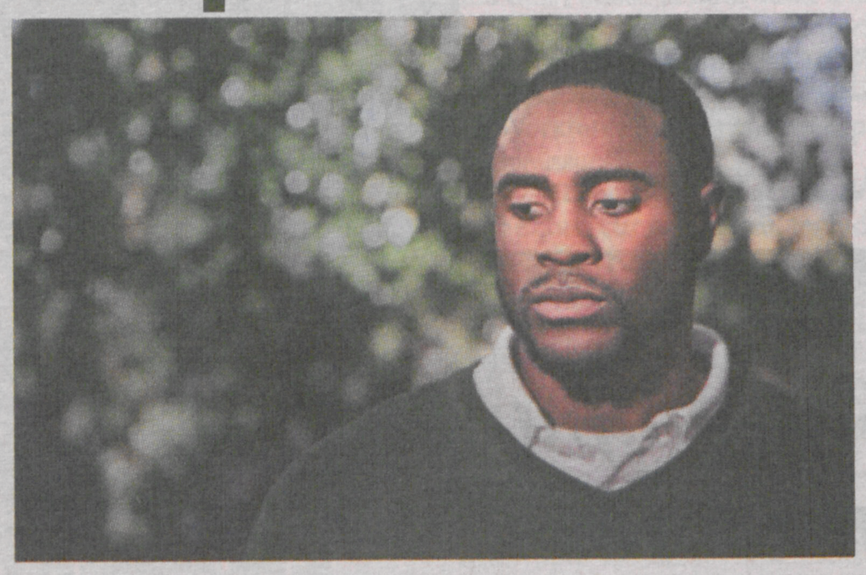

Depression can affect anyone.

Talk to your doctor if you think it may be affecting you.

Depression may lead to higher rates of HIV and STD infections. Take time to learn about your health. Take steps to reduce your risk. Use condoms. Talk to your partners about HIV and STDs. Get tested regularly.

Alder Health Services offers medical and behavioral health services focused on the unique needs of the LGBT community in South Central Pennsylvania.

Behavioral Health Services start in January 2011. No insurance necessary.

For more information call 1.800.867.1550 or visit www.ALDERHEALTH.org.

Men4Men (M4M) is a program dedicated to the health and wellness of gay, bisexual and questioning men in South Central PA. Men4Men is a project of Alder Health Services (formerly AIDS Community Alliance). For more information on Men4Men visit myspace.com/acam4m or call 1.800.867.1550.

Men4Men is funded in part by The AIDS Fund of South Central PA , FHCCP and Highmark.

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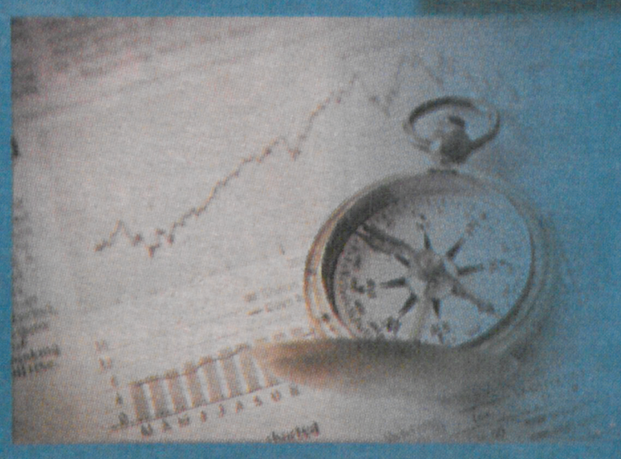

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Trend: Violence cont'd

"When I was first locked up, when I was first raped, I was a terrified 12-year-old boy," said Troy Erik Isaac, 36, who was sexually assaulted repeatedly while serving time in juvenile and adult facilities. "I had never been violent and I was different — I was skinny and effeminate."

Isaac was mentioned in an article that appeared in the New York Review of Books in March and was interviewed by Fox Television in Los Angeles this year. He was in and out of jail for 20 years but created a community service organization and in February testified before Congress about sexual abuse of inmates.

Social workers are working to sexual and other abuse in both adult and juvenile detention facilities but much work needs to be done said Melvin Wilson, MBA, MSW, LCSW, manager of NASW's Center for Workforce Studies and an expert on justice issues.

"The whole issue of sexual violence in the correctional system, including adult and juvenile facilities, is at epidemic proportions."

Ryan and McHaelen have no illusions that mistreatment of LGBT youth will change soon. Part of the problem is that detention centers are often geared toward being more punitive than rehabilitative, Ryan said.

McHaelen said anyone who works with youth should get initial and then periodic training on how to be more sensitive to the needs of lgbt young people.

"Whatever the bias we are talking about – heterosexism, classism, racism, gender bias, etc. – each of us has internalized these prejudices to one degree or another," she said. "When unexamined or unresolved, these biases can't help but negatively impact our work.

"Unfortunately, the direct care staff with the most face-to-face interactions with youth are often the staff with the least amount of this kind of training. In my opinion, policies and procedures are necessary – but not sufficient in creating safe environments for lgbt youth."

Lancaster events

Elie Nadelman and the Influence of Folk Art
From 10/11/2010 to 12/31/2010
Demuth Museum
Lancaster, PA

Voices of Christmas
From 10/30/2010 to 12/30/2010
Sight & Sound Living Waters Theatre
Strasburg, PA

First Friday at Tamanend Winery
From 10/1/2010 to 12/1/2010
Red Rose Wine Tasting Room
Lancaster, PA

The Strike Outs started up their bowling league for a second year in a row at Colony Park North, York. The fun and formal league goes for 32 weeks ending with a dinner for members. Info: strikeoutsbowling@gmail.com.

Mark Calendar: Keystone Conference March 9-13, 2011

The 2011 Keystone Conference web site is up. The event drew 250+ participants last year and is set for March 9-13, 2011 at Sheraton Harrisburg-Hershey Hotel. The conference offers room blocks, reduced room rates (that sold out twice last year), and educational sessions. Keystone Conference is operated by TransCentralPA, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Info: www.Keystone-Conference.org.

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Achieving a Higher Quality of Lesbian Health Care

By Winnie McCroy
Central Voice NYC Correspondent

Lesbians face challenges when dealing with the health care system, ranging from fear of a doctor's negative reactions, to lack of understanding about unique risks, to a lack of health insurance. These factors can cause lesbians to avoid regular checkups and delay seeking care, leading to poor mental and physical health. But thanks to organizations such as the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association, the Mautner Project, and the National Center for Lesbian Rights, we can learn about our health risks, find a compassionate health care provider, and protect our families and ourselves.

Some of the primary health concerns for lesbians include cancer, obesity and poor nutrition, smoking, drug and alcohol addiction, heart disease, and depression or anxiety.

"Although any kind of cancer can affect…lesbian or bisexual women, certain things do put us at higher risks, such as not having kids - or not having them until later in life," said D Magrini, Director of Educational Programming for The Mautner Project, a lesbian health organization headquartered in Washington, DC. Researchers believe that the hormones released during pregnancy and breastfeeding may protect women against breast, endometrial, and ovarian cancers.

The bigger issue, said Magrini, is that lesbians are not practicing breast health awareness or accessing medical care at the same rate as straight women. Lesbians are also less likely to visit a doctor for routine Pap screenings, which can prevent or detect cervical cancer. And because these screenings are often tied to the need for birth control, which most lesbians do not access, many providers are unaware that they should recommend them to lesbian or bisexual patients.

"It is not because these doctors are evil," said Magrini. "It is our job to tell doctors that women on all ends of the spectrum need a full pelvic exam and Pap. I also go out and tell women what the exam looks like, show them the equipment, and give them the power to say 'stop' if something is frightening or painful. When both the provider and the client have the proper tools, you will achieve the best outcome."

Because lesbians are less consumed with body image than straight women, obesity is a problem for our community. Studies suggest that lesbians have a higher body mass than straight women, and that we may store fat in the abdomen, placing us at a higher risk for heart disease, cancers, and premature death. When coupled with lesbian's lower rate of exercise and poor nutrition, this condition is exacerbated.

While today there exists a wide variety of social activities for lesbian and bisexual women, a large part of our culture remains tied to the bar scene. Whether prompted by bar culture, low self-esteem, stress from discrimination, or targeted advertising, lesbians are more likely to smoke, leading to heart disease, and lung and throat cancers.

"We do smoking cessation in Washington, DC, knowing that we as group smoke more than our heterosexual counterparts," said Magrini. "Through targeted intervention we talk about issues and barriers to care, and how can we address them as directly as possible." These outreach efforts range from DC's Black Pride and Capital Pride to tabling at social gatherings or nightclubs to make the community aware of Mautner's programming.

Although studies indicate that a lessening of social stigma and growing awareness around health has lead to a decline of alcohol and drug abuse among lesbians, this problem is still prevalent among gay youth.

Lesbian and bisexual women also report higher rates of depression and anxiety than straight women, perhaps motivated by social stigma, rejection by family, abuse or violence. Mental illness can take a toll on physical health, leading to stress, stroke, or heart attacks.

Heart disease is already the number one killer of all women. When you figure in lesbians' high risk factors, the chances for heart disease increase. Although you can't control family history, race, or aging, you can improve cardiovascular health by quitting smoking, exercising, and proper nutrition.

Doctors suggest that lesbians drink only in moderation, find alternative ways to reduce stress such as yoga, meditation, and massage, and get tested for sexually transmitted infections like Chlamydia and herpes. If your Pap test is abnormal, get an HPV test, which can help prevent cervical cancer. Practice safe-sex methods like using condoms on sex toys to avoid sharing vaginal fluids or blood. Older lesbians should get a bone density test, and make sure to take calcium and vitamin D supplements.

And, although the gay community likes to sweep it under the rug, domestic violence does affect lesbians. Call the police if you or your children are in danger, and call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-SAFE or contact the YWCA Domestic Violence Crisis Hotline at 800-654-1211.

Of course, the best strategy for staying healthy is talking to your doctor regularly about preventative screenings. To do this, you must be comfortable with your health care provider, and they must be educated on the latest scientific data on basic lesbian health.

The Lesbian Health Fund of GLMA helps support research in risk factors for cancers among lesbians, mental health concerns, family issues such as safe insemination techniques, and access to care. Since 1992, LHF has funded nearly one half

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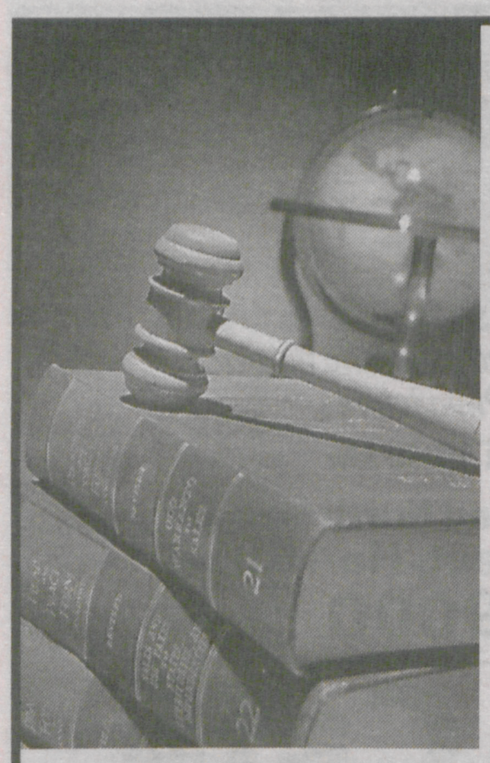

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Lesbian Health Care cont'd

million dollars in research for these issues. They also work to educate providers and scientists about lesbian health.

"It is important for lesbians to be comfortable with their health care provider so that they are able to disclose the full range of their health issues in a setting that provides a safe space for them free of discrimination. GLMA serves the LGBT community by connecting patients to providers who are sensitive to their needs through our online Provider Directory," said Lara Morgan, Membership and Development Coordinator of GLMA's LHF. Contact them at www.glma.org or 415-255-4547.

The Mautner Project conducts similar outreach efforts. "We have done education outreach for over 6,000 medical providers and frontline staff in their interactions with women who seek care at their facilities," said Magrini. "We address issues around language, around research regarding lesbian health, and give them the tools to create a healthy, safe environment for their client."

Although they do not provide direct services, The Mautner Project also has its own resource database of educated health care providers, even for those without insurance. "We direct women to resources that offer low or no cost services," said Magrini. "Because of a lack of marriage or same-sex partner benefits, lack of insurance is a larger problem in our community, and we work hard with facilities to get slots for people who need them." Visit them at www.mautnerproject.org or info@mautnerproject.org.

Once you have secured your rights, protect them. The National Center for Lesbian Rights Lifelines publication can advise you on establishing a durable power of attorney, which will allow your partner to make decisions about your health in the event that you can't make them yourself. Without this healthcare proxy, providers will turn to your relatives. If you are single, you can ensure your wishes are followed by creating a living will or medical directive.

Although the NCLR recommends an attorney draft all legal documents, they can help make you aware of issues such as a hospital visitation, authorization of consent to medical treatment of a minor, nomination of a guardian, or drafting a valid will. For lesbian parents or couples, especially those in states where gay rights or same-sex relationships are not recognized, having these documents may mean the difference between securing emergency medical care for a non-biological child, or visiting a sick partner in the hospital. Know your rights and protect them by visiting www.nclrights.org or calling their toll-free helpline at 800-528-6257.

Pride Needs Your Help for 20th Event

By Justin C. Bacon, President
Central Pa Pride Festival

Every year about 5,000 people attend the Central Pa Pride Festival along Riverfront Park in Harrisburg, Pa. And every year an amazing festival is pulled off by the Entertainment, Vendors, Volunteers and Board Members involved with the Festival.

The Pride Festival of Central Pa is proud to announce our new Board of Directors, gearing up for the 20th Anniversary of Pride in Central Pa.

Of course, we could not have gotten where we are today without a few people that we need to Thank. Our Past President Jeff Clouser, Parade Chair Mark Smith, Vice President in charge of Fundraising Donald Anklam, and past Festival Chair Gary Fey, along with Dale Schauer past Volunteer Chairman and Alana Berger past Vice President of Operations. Some of these members have been with the Board for more than five years. All these individuals have taken pride through a difficult transitioning period and gotten us ready for our big 20th Anniversary. With out them we would not be able to pull off a 20th Anniversary Festival.

The new Board of Directors are Board President Justin C. Bacon, Vice President of Marketing & Co- Festival Chair Brad Martin, Vice President of Operations & Co-Festival Chair Adam Hagerty, Communications Officer Tammy Cassel, Treasurer Diana Kuhns, Entertainment Chair Dame Glenda, and Volunteer Chair Shawn Raup. And Sub-cmmittee cairpersons are Spirits United Chair, Marlene Kanuck, and Voices United Chair Paul Foltz.

We are still looking for more Committee Chairs. If anyone is interested they are encouraged to go to our website www.prideofcentralpa.org to send us an email on volunteering with the Festival. Also our Board meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every month. Please go to our website to find out where the meetings will be held.

We also have a new face book page, http://www.facebook.com/pages/Pride-Festival-of-Central-Pa/153092238044237?v=wall. Please friend us to become more involved with pride and hear updates on our fundraising opportunities throughout the year. Also our New Address is PO Box 4312 Harrisburg, Pa 17111

Upcoming events financially support Pride

- December 11, Pride Fundraiser at Liquid 891
- Dine-Ins will be held Jan. 1 through March 31, 2011 Contact us to host
- April 16, 2011 – Spring Fling, Four Points by Sheraton Harrisburg

coming out column

Queeries: House Ettiquette

By Steven Petrow

Sex when you're a houseguest

Q: My boyfriend "Alexander" and I are going to be visiting some close friends at their summer house next weekend. He really likes the idea of getting hot and heavy while we're there; I think it's rude to have sex at someone's house when you're a guest. What do you think?

A: Although some think it's disrespectful to one's hosts to have a private pleasure-fest in your room, I think it's fine as long as you're able to keep it completely secret. No moaning, no screaming, no running through the house naked. Lock the door, and use a towel to avoid stains or other tell-tale signs. If you bring toys, make sure you pack them up on departure. And definitely don't mention it at breakfast, even in the most general or cute way - although your hosts may pick something up from the looks on your faces.

I do suggest, however, that you save your more complicated rites and rituals for the privacy of your own home, or for a hotel.

My girlfriend is a snoop

Q: My partner and I have been living together for a couple of months now and I suddenly realized that she's going through my personal papers and reading my email. I actually don't have anything to hide, but I feel like she's invading my privacy and don't like that one bit. When I called her on this behavior, she said, "That's what lesbian couples do." Is it?

A: No, lesbian couples don't do that. Nor do couples of other kinds - if they want their relationship to last. And you're quite right that it's irrelevant whether or not you have anything to hide. There is a fine, but important, distinction between "looking" and "snooping." It's just looking when there's a bank statement or personal letter on the table or a racy photo on the wall, but it becomes snooping when you take some action, like opening the letter, looking through papers, opening a photo album or visiting an online account.

To start, I suggest changing your password, getting a file cabinet that locks and telling your partner that her prying is not acceptable to you. The larger issue here may be one of trust, however; she doesn't seem to trust you, but is also apparently not trustworthy herself. But I'm only a manners expert, not a therapist, so I'll stop here.

Using email to announce your separation

Q: Jane and I were together for more than 10 years and after lots of couples counseling and a trial separation, we've decided to call it quits. How do we tell our friends, some of whom know of our difficulties and some who, blissfully, don't? Is a mass email okay for this?

A: No, email is not a good medium for this. While spamming your friends is useful when you're hosting a yard sale or declaring your support for a political candidate, news about your breakup is a bad use of the technology because the communication is too impersonal and too likely to be reforwarded. Also, as much as you may think you're sending an entirely unemotional announcement, sometimes hurt feelings or resentments creep into these things. I've known a friend or two who have taken this route and come to regret what they wrote.

Sure, email is efficient and egalitarian and would save you the heartbreak of having to tell and retell your story of woe, but you're better off speaking directly to close friends and family about what has happened. Of course, word will get around soon enough on its own.

Later on in this process, when you've both really begun to move on, go ahead and send a mass email letting friends know of a new address, email or phone number —along with anything personal, such as perhaps that things are now going well for you. That note just shouldn't be the first they're hearing of your separation.

Left out of my husband's death notice

Q: I was in such a state of shock after my husband died that I had no idea his brother and sister were preparing an obit. It was bad enough that they didn't show it to me, but to make matters worse they didn't even include me as a survivor. What should I do now?

A: Until you lose someone close to you, it's hard to see the importance of obituaries; the truth is that they carry a great deal of symbolism, so I can understand why you're upset. Take aside the former in-law you are closest to and explain your feelings with as little rancor as you can. You could say, for instance: "After spending ten years as your brother's husband and best friend, I can't tell you how hurt I was not to be mentioned as his survivor." In the meantime, prepare your own notice and pay for its placement. Or, if too much time has gone by, consider placing an "In Memoriam" notice on the anniversary of your partner's death, on his birthday or on the date of your wedding anniversary.

Steven Petrow can be found online at www.gayandlesbianmanners.com. He's the author of "The Essential Guide to Gay Manners & Etiquette" and blogs regularly on Huffington Post.

Another Successful FAB by Community Center

The highlight of the evening was presentation of the 2010 FAB Award honoring those who have made important contributions to the economic, political, cultural, spiritual and social progress of lgbt causes within our region. 2010 FAB Award Recipients are: Paul Foltz, Harrisburg, Theatre Harrisburg Master Costumer and designer with over 30 years of service to the lgbt community, including ably helping to produce the region's annual Gay Pride Parade; Carol and Bill (deceased) Sizemore, Dover, PFLAG of Central PA; Ashley McLaughlin, Lancaster, President of the Gender and Sexuality Alliance at Millersville University.

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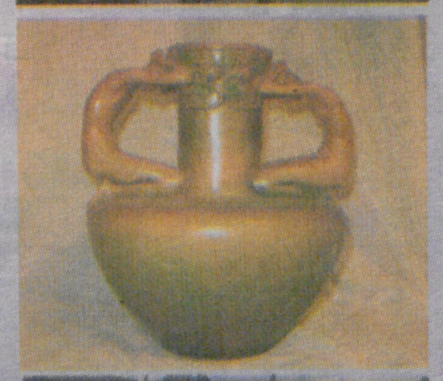

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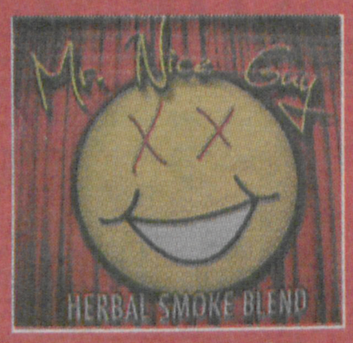

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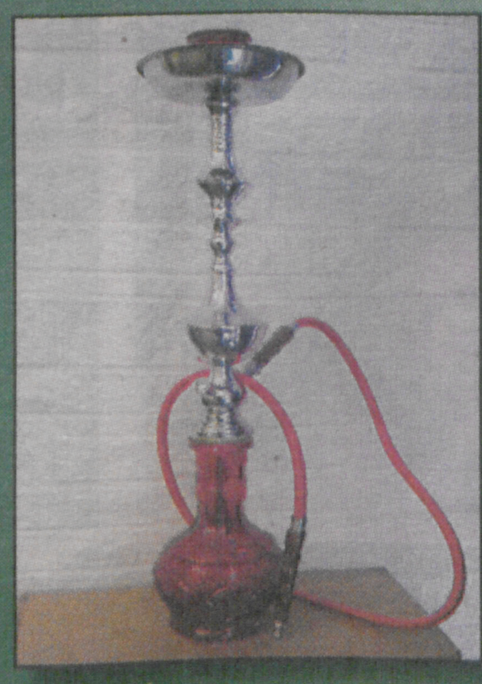

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For more information or to volunteer with Alder Health Services, please visit www.ALDERHEALTH.org or call 1.800.867.1550.

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Community Center Aims at Growth in 2011

Louis Marven
LGBT Community Center

Thanks to all who attended the annual Fall Achievement Benefit! This year we honored the work of Carol and Bill Sizemore, Ashley McLaughlin, and Paul Foltz, each of whom has contributed greatly to lgbt initiatives in the region.

We also heard from McLaughlin and two other young people - high school students Rachel Watson and Jesse Egner - on how our programs have impacted their lives as young leaders. As 2010 comes to a close, I am compelled to think about the great steps forward the LGBT Community Center has taken this year.

The center expanded to two full-time staff members, and grew its community programming. We offered several educational series, including leadership training for various organizations, a memoir-writing workshop, and stress reduction through yoga sessions. The center engaged the community through several cultural events as well, including various screenings and discussion of the films "Out in the Silenc" and "Stonewall Uprising" and a reading from local author Wendy Moffat from her biography "A Great Unrecorded History: A New Life of E. M. Forster."

We also held several singles mixers and outdoors events, and were very proud to celebrate the one-year anniversary of our book club in September. The book club has grown so much that it has expanded to an even larger section on the second floor of the Midtown Scholar Bookstore for its meeting on the third Sundays of each month.

Common Roads, the center's youth programming arm, has continued to offer programming, education, and advocacy for youth in the region. Groups thrive weekly in Harrisburg and Lancaster. We've also offered outreach and technical assistant to gay and straight alliances, and education and safe zone training for professional staff. Common Roads youth also came together to produce a summer fundraiser for their programs called the Back to School Benefit, featuring performances from several talented local youth musicians.

This year we held our third annual Gay/Straight Leadership Summit, both in February and again in May for several groups unable to attend because of snow the first time around. We're planning the fourth annual summit for Feb. 25, 2011 at Dickinson College with our partners from Planned Parenthood of Central PA and the College's Office of Diversity Initiatives.

The year ends with the center rolling out the results of an anti-bullying work group in the Harrisburg School District. The group is comprised of district representatives, YWCA, Institute for Cultural Partnerships, Keystone Human Services, City of Harrisburg, and others, led by Reverend Monica Dawkins-Smith from Journeys/Salem United Chgurch of Christ. We will train faculty and staff to confront the epidemic of bullying in our schools.

The center is poised to continue its growth in 2011 as a newly-hired Executive Director takes leadership. We will launch programs for faith communities based on a generous grant from the Carpenter Foundation, further develop the Central Pennsylvania LGBT Aging Network (CPLAN) after an advisory board has been seated. We'll also continue strong programming, education, and advocacy for young people that you have come to expect from Common Roads.

In a second march-style rally, activists urged Lancaster County commissioners to keep the county Human Relations Commission. Commissioner Scott Martin, who proposed closing the 46-year-old agency, forecast the move would save each county taxpayer 93 cents annually. Before the furor began last June, gay-rights activists asked commissioners to expand HRC's scope to include discrimination cases based on sexual orientation, according to Adanjesus Marin, a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Organizing Committee member and march coordinator.

Donna Rose Named Center Exec

Donna Rose

After speaking to an enthusiastic crowd at FAB last October, Donna Rose was announced as the new executive director of the LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central Pennsylvania.

She calls herself an "accidental activist." The nationally known speaker and writer on lgbt inclusion and equality, was the first transgender serving the Human Rights Campaign, the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, and the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce.

"That someone of Rose's national stature is sharing her story with us is just phenomenal," said Elizabeth Mullaugh, president of the LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central Pennsylvania. "I'm so pleased about introducing her to the community."

"Over the past 10 years I have established a reputation as a nationally respected leader, spokesperson, and advocate for lgbt rights, dignity, and a broader sense of community," Rose said. "I have worked at the grass-roots level with activists from across the country to coordinate, communicate, and educate."

Rose's journey toward advocacy began with the publication of her 2003 award-winning memoir, Wrapped in Blue, which chronicled her transition from David to Donna after years of self-discovery and difficult surgeries.

Since then, she has been featured in national publications as varied as USA Today, Marie Claire and Diversity Inc. She was one of four transgender individuals highlighted in "Transgender Summit," a four-part series on Entertainment Tonight, and she is a highly sought-after keynote speaker at colleges, universities and Fortune 500 companies throughout the country.

Info: Louis Marven, 717-920-9534, lmarven@centralpalgbtcenter.org.

Art Association Exhibit Runs to Nov. 24

An invitational exhibit photographs, figurative graphites and oils, mixed media works, and abstract acrylics are on view at the Art Association of Harrisburg until Nov. 24.

Photographer Aaronel deRoy Gruber states that she always works intuitively, thinking about photographs in the same way she does in creating a painting. "My mind's eye is my juror," she avers. She goes on to say that her series of abstract images "represents a celebration of colour, movement, and gesture." The images are a blending of two or more original exposures to reflect what is "most interesting to my artistic discernment." She makes use of his foundation in painting by utilizing his computer to combine pleasing elements from several exposures. Her work has been exhibited extensively, both in the US and abroad.

Gail Postal's two major influences on her work are old hand-tinted black-and-white Japanese photographs and Russian Orthodox icons. She does graphite drawings and then adds gold paint and many layers of transparent oil or acrylic paint to create an icon of a contemporary "saint." She holds her BA and MS from Brooklyn College and her PhD. from Fordham University in NY. She, too, has exhibited throughout the US.

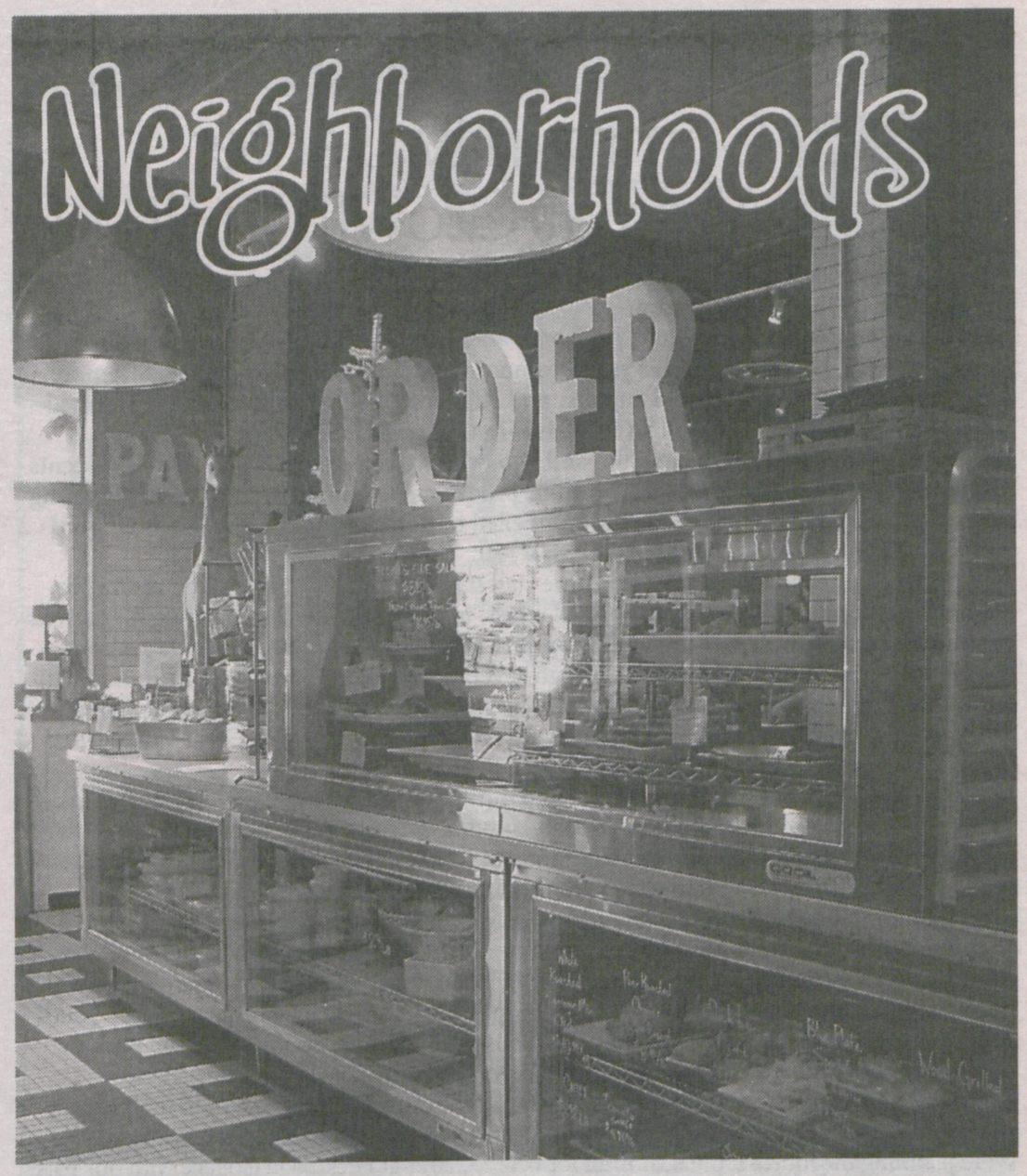
Paul Saberin approaches a new work of art with an open mind, feeling that creating an image of the human form is an opportunity and an adventure, "often with unexpected results." Saberin's earliest instruction was in traditional imagery, and his mastery of the skills of proportion, foreshortening, and perspective became a valuable foundation when the "challenge of creative image-making" became his goal. Sometimes he represents the figure in a broken, fragmented manner, often breaking with accepted ideals of the human form to create an image which reflects the 21st-century world.

Donna Usher's "Meditation Paintings" are inspired by her journey to Australia to study Aboringine dot painting, and her visual connection with the multitude of circular images found in nature. The painted orbs, spheres, circles, and dots relate to microscopic cells, egg sacs, and to the black holes and galaxies in deep space. The interaction of vibrant colour within the paintings is used to evoke visual sensations of the sublime for the viewer to meditate on, and to "renew the spirit." Usher received her BFA in painting and BS in art education from Moore College of Art and Design in Philadelphia, and her MFA from the University of Delaware.

Info: AAH, 21 N. Front St., Harrisburg. 9:30 a.m.- 9 p.m. M-Thursday, 9:30-4 F, 10-4 Sat., 2-5 Sun; www.artassocofhbg.com, 236-1432

Atlanta's Hippest Neighborhoods

OUT OF TOWN
by Andrew Collins



Provisions is one several trendy restaurants that have led to a renaissance in Atlanta's hip West Midtown neighborhood. *Photo by Andrew Collins*

The cultural and commercial capital of the Southeast, Atlanta (www.atlanta.net) has rapidly become one of the nation's true A-list gay destinations, with its hugely visible and dynamic GLBT scene and a wealth of accommodations, nightspots, restaurants and shops with strong ties to the community. Atlanta's considerable sprawl and sometimes dizzyingly intense traffic can feel a little overwhelming at times, but if you venture away from the freeways and beyond the skyscrapers of downtown, you'll discover a number of engaging, vibrant neighborhoods rife with gay-popular bars, restaurants, inns and boutiques.

Here's a look at some of the best Atlanta areas for exploring.

Inman Park and Little Five Points - 2.5 miles east of downtown

Inman Park (http://www.inmanpark.org), which is considered to have been Atlanta's first suburb, had become run-down and derelict before gay and African-American gentrification took hold in the early '80s, leading to the restoration of many of its elaborate Victorian houses. The mix of interesting architecture extends south to neighborhoods like Cabbagetown and Grant Park (http://grantpark.org), and the cool, eclectic shopping and dining pushes east into Little Five Points (http://littlefivepoints.net).

Highlights for hanging out and eating well in Inman Park include Shaun's (http://www.shaunsrestaurant.com), a chic contemporary eatery known for stellar regional American cooking; and Wisteria (http://www.wisteria-atlanta.com), which presents a creative take on classic Southern fare - the fried chicken with bacon-braised collard green is among the best in the city. In the more dressed-down Little Five Points - where piercings and tattoos have been in style for years - check out famed emporia like kitschy Junkman's Daughter and Psycho Sisters vintage clothing, before snacking on hefty burritos at El Myr (http://www.elmyr.com) or a spicy Cajun pie at Savage Pizza (http://savagepizza.com).

East Atlanta Village - 3 miles southeast of downtown

One of the most diverse and independent-spirited enclaves in the city, East Atlanta Village (http://www.eastatlantavillage.net) is a great area for walking, with a number of decidedly offbeat, arty and affordable businesses and restaurants set along two main streets: Greenwood Avenue and Flat Shoals Avenue. Highlights include a pair of gay bars, the fun-loving and quirky lounge Mary's (http://www.marysatlanta.com), and the friendly lesbian bar My Sisters Room (http://www.mysistersroom.com), which relocated here from Decatur a few years ago. Stop by Joe's Coffee (http://www.eastatlantavillage.net/joes_coffee.phtml) for strong java and a chance to mingle with a cross-section of neighborhood locals.

Virginia-Highland - 2 miles east of downtown

Just beyond Piedmont Park and the heart of Midtown's well-established gay scene, and with arguably the city's best all-around window-shopping, Virginia-Highland (http://www.virginiahighland.com) has been a fashionable place to live and explore since the neighborhood was developed roughly a century ago.

Rather than possessing one definitive center, Virginia-Highland comprises several small but lively commercial hubs. At Amsterdam Walk you'll find lively gay nightspots like Amsterdam sports bar (http://www.myspace.com/amsterdamatlanta) and Bellissima lesbian lounge (http://www.myspace.com/bellissima_lounge). Drive south along Highland Avenue through Morningside, and past the intersections of Amsterdam, Virginia, and Ponce de Leon and you'll discover many more cool places to dine, drink, and shop. The old-school Majestic Diner (http://www.majesticdiner.com), whose neon sign proudly proclaims "food that pleases - since 1929", can be counted on for late-night pancakes after the bars close - it's a short drive from several gay clubs.

Midtown - 3 miles north of downtown

With its central location just off the interstate and skyline of modern apartment, office and hotel towers, Midtown may not leap out as a particularly notable neighborhood for walking around. Indeed, valet parking is commonplace at Midtown's many fine eateries. But this is the heart of Atlanta's GLBT community, and it's unquestionably trendy and fun.

The neighborhood has a few cultural highlights, including the High Museum of Art and Margaret Mitchell House & Museum. And if the weather's cooperating, do not miss the 15-acre Atlanta Botanical Garden, which adjoins leafy Piedmont Park (a favorite haunt of the city's gay sunworshipers and outdoorsy types). Here you'll find one of the world's most important displays of tropical orchids.

Midtown contains the lion's share of Atlanta's gay bars, including such popular haunts as Burkhart's (www.burkharts.com) video bar; Bulldog's, a one of the South's GLBT African-American hangouts; and Blake's on the Park (www.blakesontheparkatlanta.com), a classic bar with a young, pretty crowd. There's also Outwrite Bookstore & Coffeehouse (www.outwritebooks.com), the city's highly successful source of GLBT books and literature that doubles as a cozy java joint.

Definitive gay brunch spots include festive Babs (www.babsmidtown.com); Einstein's (www.einsteinsatlanta.com), also fun later in the evening for drinks or dinner, and the Flying Biscuit Midtown (www.flyingbiscuit.com), the original of which is in yet another cool part of town, Candler Park). Atlanta's branch of the upscale chain Ra Sushi (www.rasushi.com) is spacious, trendy, and enjoyable both for colorful cocktails and tasty Japanese food, while Ecco (www.ecco-atlanta.com) is reliable for first-rate southern European cuisine, including a dazzling selection of cheeses and cured meats.

Other stylish and sophisticated dining options of note include One Midtown Kitchen (www.onemidtownkitchen.com), a bustling restaurant just northeast of Piedmont Park that serves some of the city's most memorable regional American fare, and Pacci (http://pacciatlanta.com), which is set inside the hip Hotel Palomar and turns out sensational rustic Italian cuisine, including some of the best steaks in town.

Westside - 3 miles northwest of downtown

Known variously as West Midtown and Home Park (www.homepark.org), the very eclectic neighborhood that broadly takes in Atlanta's Westside is most interesting these days along Howell Mill Road, south for several blocks from about 14th Street. Large warehouses and shiny new structures contain condos, lofts, and a smattering of galleries and restaurants, some of them superb. This part of the neighborhood is known as the Westside Arts District (http://wadatlanta.org), and its culinary stars include Bacchnalia and its adjacent lunch room and gourmet-food shop Star Provisions (www.starprovisions.com), the see-and-be-seen contemporary American restaurant Bocado (www.bocadoatlanta.com), and the colorful coffeehouse Octane (www.octanecoffee.com).

Castleberry Hill - 1 mile west of downtown

Rapidly up-and-coming Castleberry Hill (www.castleberryhill.org) comprises a patch of handsome warehouses and industrial buildings that have been collectively rehabbed into a notable arts district. Along bustling Walker and Peter streets, you'll find several provocative galleries. You might begin your explorations with lunch at the superb (and gay-owned) No Mas Cantina (www.nomascantina.com), a festive Mexican restaurant that serves tantalizingly good tortilla soup and fish tacos. It's attached to a dramatic home-furnishings store filled with stunning, handcrafted furniture and decorative arts from Mexico.

Decatur - 6 miles northeast of Atlanta

An entirely separate city of about 20,000 that's a 10 to 15-minute drive from Midtown, Decatur is far more than a mere Atlanta neighborhood. This liberal-leaning community with a vibrant downtown does in some ways feel like an extension of Atlanta's GLBT scene. It's home to the gay and lesbian nightclub Traxx (www.traxxatlanta.com) as well as the seminal mod-Southern-food restaurant Watershed (www.watershedrestaurant.com), which is owned by one-half of the Indigo Girls duo, Emily Saliers, and serves absolutely fantastic food. Don't miss the Sunday brunch, which features creamy chicken hash, corn griddle cakes and poached eggs. Cafe Lily (www.cafelily.com), with its delicious pan-Mediterranean cuisine, is another great

continued on page 23

M4M: 1 in 5 Infected

By M4M Project

1 in 5 men (19%) who have sex with men in 21 U.S. cities has HIV. Nearly half (44%) are unaware that they are infected, according to a new analysis from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In the study, young MSM and MSM of color were least likely to know their HIV status.

"This study's message is clear: HIV exacts a devastating toll on men who have sex with men in America's major cities, and yet far too many of those who are infected don't know it," said Kevin Fenton, M.D., director of CDC's National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention.

"We need to increase access to HIV testing so that more MSM know their status, and we all must bring new energy, new approaches, and new champions to the fight against HIV among men who have sex with men."

The study's results bolster key themes in the President's National HIV/AIDS Strategy for the United States. The recently released strategy states that "the United States cannot reduce the number of HIV infections nationally without better addressing HIV among gay and bisexual men," and MSM are listed among a few priority populations to focus HIV prevention efforts. The President's strategy also sets targets for reducing the number of individuals living with HIV who are unaware of their HIV status.

The CDC study tested 8,153 MSM in 21 cities participating in the 2008 National HIV Behavioral Surveillance System (NHBS), and examined HIV prevalence and awareness of HIV status among this group. NHBS monitors HIV testing, risk behaviors, and access to prevention services among at-risk populations in cities with high numbers of persons living with AIDS.

While MSM of all races and ethnicities were severely affected, black MSM were particularly impacted: 28 percent of black MSM were HIV-infected, compared to 18 percent of Hispanic and 16 percent of white MSM.

The study also found a strong link between socioeconomic status and HIV among MSM: prevalence increased as education and income decreased, and awareness of HIV status was higher among MSM with greater education and income. These findings echo similar disparities found in recent NHBS research among heterosexuals.

* Low awareness of HIV infection a major concern, particularly for younger men

* The study provided additional insight into the populations of MSM most in need of HIV testing and prevention:

Among racial/ethnic groups, black MSM with HIV were least likely to be aware of their infection (59 percent unaware, vs. 46 percent for Hispanic MSM and 26 percent for white MSM).

While young MSM (under age 30) had lower HIV prevalence than older men, they were far more likely to be unaware of their HIV infection. Among MSM aged 18-29 who had HIV, nearly two-thirds (63 percent) were unaware, versus 37 percent for men age 30 and older.

Among young MSM, young MSM of color were less likely than whites to know they were HIV-infected. Among HIV-infected black MSM under age 30, 71 percent were unaware of their infection; among HIV-infected Hispanic MSM under age 30, 63 percent were unaware. This compares to 40 percent of HIV-infected white MSM under age 30.

CDC officials note that low awareness of HIV status among young MSM likely reflects several factors: they may have been infected more recently, may underestimate their personal risk, may have had fewer opportunities to get tested, or may believe that advances in HIV treatment minimize the threat of HIV. For young MSM of color, discrimination and socioeconomic factors – such as poverty, homophobia, stigma, and limited healthcare access – may be especially acute and pose particular challenges.

"For young men who have sex with men – including young men of color who are least likely to know they may be infected – the future is truly on the line," said Jonathan Mermin, M.D., director of CDC's Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention. "It is critical that we reach these young men early in their lives with HIV prevention and testing services and continue to make these vital services available as they become older."

CDC estimates that the majority of new sexually transmitted infections are transmitted by individuals who are unaware of their infection, and studies show that once people learn they are HIV-infected, most take steps to protect their partners. Therefore, because undiagnosed infection likely plays a major role in HIV transmission, reaching younger MSM with regular HIV testing is critical.

CDC recommends that MSM of all ages get tested for HIV at least annually, or more often (every three to six months) if they are at increased risk (e.g., those with multiple or anonymous sex partners, or who use drugs during sex).

Contact: 717-233-7190, M4M is a component of AIDS Community Alliance.

Out of Town cont'd

option for a meal.

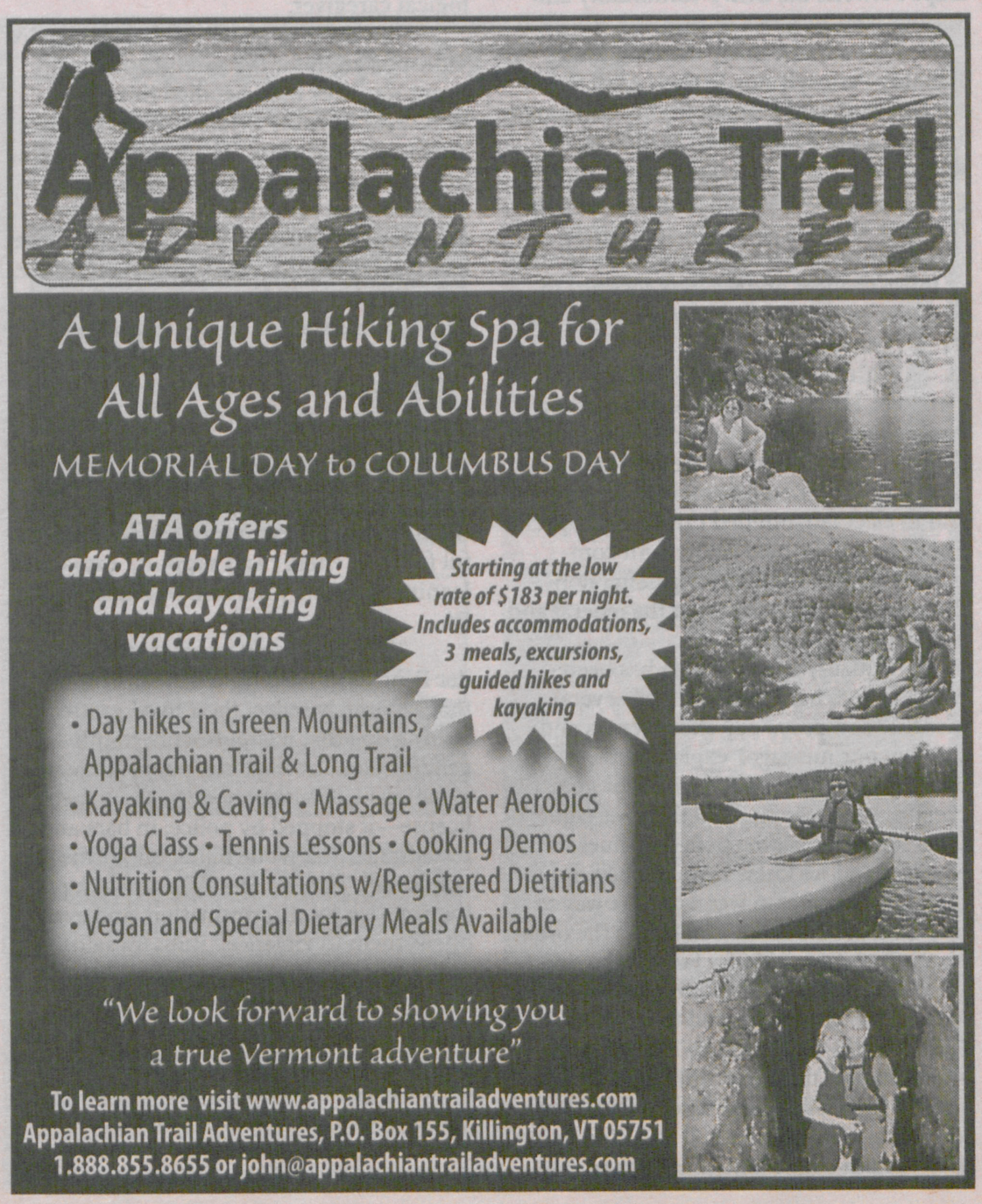
Where to Stay in Atlanta

The Hotel Palomar (www.hotelpalomar-atlantamidtown.com) was opened by the favorite GLBT-friendly brand Kimpton in 2009 and has quickly become a favorite lodging choice for the design-minded, with its contemporary, understatedly elegant rooms. Try to get one facing south on a high floor, as views of the downtown skyline are impressive. It's an easy walk from Piedmont Park, gay nightlife and Midtown museums, as is the cushy Four Seasons (www.fourseasons.com), a striking, 20-story hotel with a stunning 12,000-square-foot spa.

For a reasonably priced Midtown option that's strong on personality and ambience, try the gay-popular Artmore Hotel (www.artmorehotel.com), which occupies a 1920s Spanish-Mediterranean-influenced building that's just steps from the High Museum. Also well-priced and with a sleek, smart design, the whimsically decorated Hotel Indigo (www.hotelindigo.com) has artful rooms with Nantucket-inspired blue-and-white furniture. There's also a 24-hour gym and a dapper little coffeehouse with comfy seating off the lobby.

In a city with relatively few historic inns, the gay-owned Gaslight Inn (www.gaslightinn.com) in Virginia-Highland stands out for its regal accommodations. In charming Inman Park, the King- King-Keith House B&B (www.kingkeith.com) occupies a dramatic 1890s "painted lady" Victorian with four period-style guest rooms plus a charming detached cottage. And just down the street from Piedmont Park and several gay bars and eateries, the eco-conscious and pet-friendly Stonehurst Place (www.stonehurstplace.com) is one of the city's most romantic small inns. The five spacious suites are exquisitely decorated and contain such plush amenities as iPod docks, flat-screen TVs with DVD players, and - in the top suites - fireplaces, heated bathroom floors, and two-person walk-in showers and spa tubs.

Andrew Collins covers gay travel for the New York Times-owned website About.com and is the author of Fodor's Gay Guide to the USA. He can be reached care of this publication or at OutofTown@qsyndicate.com.



Equality Pennsylvania & HRC Partner; PennDOT Agreement Reached

Equality Pennsylvania

In a new partnership to focus on employment protections and working with communities of faith, Equality Pennsylvania, a statewide lgbt advocacy organization and The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) have formed a partnership to secure equality in Pennsylvania.

Equality Pennsylvania also recently reached agreement with PennDOT on a change in gender marker policy.

The new HRC partnership includes joint staff member Allyson Diane Hamm, currently vice-chair of Allentown's Human Relations Commissions. She is also vice president of Interweave, the lgbt organization of the Unitarian Universalist Church. Hamm is also the former president of PRIDE of the Greater Lehigh Valley and worked as a special project and regional coordinator for PA-GALA (Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Alliance).

The partnership will focus on securing support to pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) at the federal level and statewide non-discrimination legislation, as well as improving relationships between the LGBT community and various communities of faith.

"We are extremely excited to join Equality Pennsylvania in their great work for fairness," said Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese. "EQPA clearly knows its mission and has recently undergone significant changes aimed at making it a truly effective state lgbt civil rights organization. We recognize the importance of those changes and we look forward to working with them to make equality a reality in Pennsylvania."

With an eye on the upcoming elections, HRC and EQPA will target six congressional districts, over 50 state house districts, and 25 state senate districts to gain support for employment protections and to elect fair-minded candidates. Special attention will be paid to the faith community to gain support for passing non-discrimination legislation at the federal and state levels.

"Equality Pennsylvania has been working very hard over the past several months to improve our effectiveness and sharpen our message," explained EQPA board president, Brian Sims. "Our goal remains to represent all of the state's lgbt community in finding better avenues to equality, and we knew from the beginning that this partnership was a perfect way to help us meet the many challenges the organization and our citizens face all the time."

Hamm's responsibilities will include outreach to groups located throughout Pennsylvania that could be helpful in the efforts to pass non-discrimination legislation on both a state and federal level. Her job will also involve special attention being paid to faith community outreach in the hopes of generating improved support for passing non-discrimination legislation within that large constituency. Hamm will also assist in efforts to educate the LGBT community on the upcoming election as well. She will be based in the Lehigh Valley.

PennDOT Agreement

Following several months of discussion, Equality Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) recently announced agreement on a change in gender marker policy. "Gender markers" refer to those ways in which individuals present themselves mostly on official documentation. For example, on a driver's license your "gender marker" would refer to your name and photograph.

Under previous policy, transgender individuals looking to be represented on their driver's license as their presenting gender were forced to prove that sexual reassignment surgery had occurred. With the newly adopted policy, transgender citizens of Pennsylvania will be permitted to change the designated gender on their driver's license when they are living full-time in their new gender and it can be verified by a licensed medical or psychological caregiver.

"I want to applaud the Department of Transportation for the careful and intelligent way they have handled this discussion," said Equality Pennsylvania executive director, Ted Martin. "From the very beginning, they recognized what the American Psychological Association, over 25 other states and the U. S. Department of State, has been realizing all along; that this just makes sense and is the right thing to do. This simple and cost-free change in policy will make lives better and that's really the most important point in all this."

"First, I want to commend Equality Pennsylvania for their remarkable dedication to seeing this issue to a successful conclusion. They have been a great ally to the transgender community and I am grateful for their energy and support," explained Jeanine Ruhsam, president of TransCentral PA.

"It is vitally important that transgender Pennsylvanians have driver's licenses that accurately reflect their lived gender. Having one that misrepresents your lived gender "outs" transgender people in many situations where they need to show their license—if stopped by police, in bars and restaurants, and while filling out forms for employers. This violates their privacy, puts them at risk for discrimination, and even opens them to violence," Ruhsam said.

Throughout the discussion, Equality Pennsylvania partnered with TransCentralPA, the National Center for Transgender Equality and the Gay and Lesbian Taskforce for advice and support, Mazzoni Center, Philadelphia. "I am thrilled to learn of

continued on page 29

book review

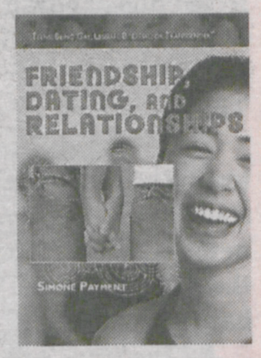
From Serious to Sexy

By Lew Maurer, Library Services Administrator
Dauphin County Library System

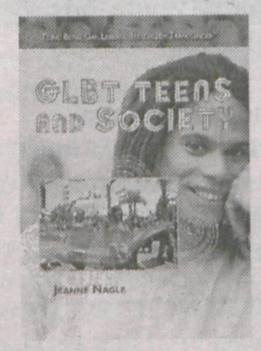
Here's a glimpse at some lgbt titles on the Dauphin County Library System's "on-order list." Some are books a bit out of the mainstream, books that hadn't already been ordered through the library's standard channels.

Take special note of the titles aimed at gay teens and people who care about them. Books such as these can be an important source of unbiased information and support for young gays, their families and friends. These and hundreds of other lgbt titles are available at any of the eight Dauphin County Library System libraries or through interlibrary loan at your home library if you don't live in Dauphin County.

A Tale of Two Daddies
Oelschlager, Vanita (Author); Blackwood, Kristin (Illustrator); Blanc, Mike (Illustrator)
"A Tale of Two Daddies" is told through a playground conversation between two children, one of whom is a girl who has two dads. This story can help parents and teachers handle questions about same-sex parents.
Publisher: Vanita Books

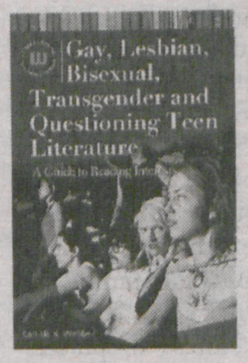


Friendship, Dating, and Relationships
Payment, Simone
Dating and relationships are important parts of the teen years. LGBT teens may have questions about these topics that are different from their straight counterparts. This book explores teens relationships with themselves, their friends, and the people they date. Issues such as getting over a breakup, dating and online safety, safe sex, and coming out to ones
friends are presented in a comprehensive, engaging manner.
Rosen Publishing Group



GLBT Teens and Society
Nagle, Jeanne
GLBT issues such as same-sex marriage, Dont Ask Dont Tell, and hate crime legislation are at the forefront of American political discourse. This informative book investigates these
topics, as well as many other issues facing the lgbt community. These hot-button topics are presented in an even-handed manner, allowing students to learn without the influence of media distortion and mixed messages.
Rosen Publishing Group

Life at School and in the Community
Worth, Richard
LGBT teens face some dramatic challenges in their community and at school. Supportive social networks are crucial for long-term health and development. This book offers strategies for coming out to ones friends, interacting with school personnel, and dealing with bullies. Advice is also given on how to organize groups such as gay-straight alliances.
Rosen Publishing Group



Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Teen Literature: A Guide to Reading Interests
Webber, Carlisle K (Author); Herald, Diana Tixier (Editor)
Aimed at librarians and reader's advisors who serve teens, this is a guide to outstanding reads for lgbt teens, for straight teens with an interest in the subject, and for gay friends and family. It provides some 300 fiction and nonfiction suggestions, including poetry, drama, and graphic novels; and organize them according to genre, subgenre and theme.
Publisher: Libraries Unlimited

Find out how your business can reach central PA's smart, successful gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community.

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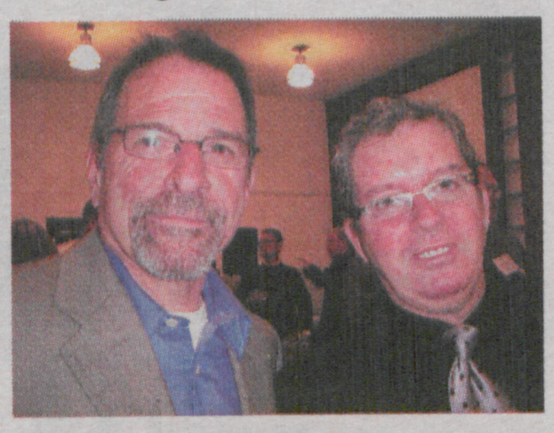

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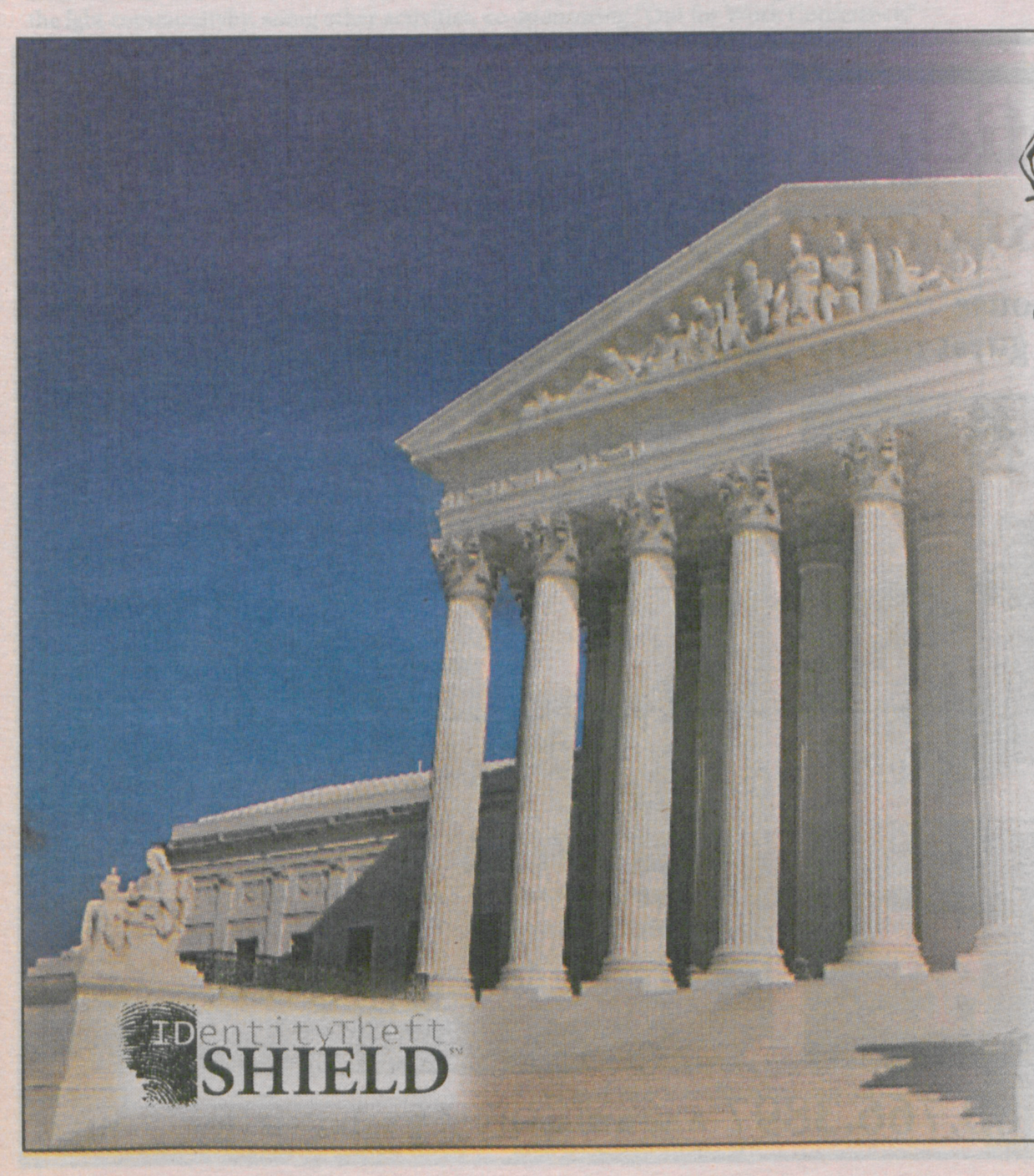

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Harrisburg Men's Chorus' New Season

The popular Harrisburg Men's Chorus offers another full season of quality entertainment for 2010-2011.

First off, the chorus offers "Chorus Christmas Capers, Continued!" Dec. 5, 4 and 7 p.m., The Maennerchor Club, 221 North Street, Harrisburg. Admission is $10. The concert is a light-hearted mix of holiday favorites with some not-so-traditional carols and tunes. The audience will be treated to several numbers performed by the full chorus and also feature a number of soloists and small ensembles. Artistic director is David Walker.

Other performances:

"It's a Gay World After All"
January 22, 2011 – 8 p.m.
The Maennerchor Club
221 North Street, HBG.

January 23, 2011 – 2 p.m.
Colonial park UCC
5000 Devonshire Road, HBG.

January 29, 2011 – 8 p.m.
Unitarian Church
1280 Clover Lane, HBG.

January 30, 2011 – 2 p.m.
Unity Church
927 Wertzville Road, Enola

Tickets:www.harrisburgmenschorus.org; (717) 236-3809

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CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA GAY AND LESBIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Chamber Attends National HRC Dinner

By Bill Kretz

Oct. 9, Central PA Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce board members attended the 14th Annual Human Rights Campaign National Dinner in Washington, DC. Debra McClain, Wells Fargo, and Seth Hamill, Posh Studios, attended as guests of The Hershey Company, who generously gave two tickets to the chamber for this event. Shannon Leonhard represented PNC Bank Lancaster at the event.

Bette Midler was event MC. Grammy-award winning a Pink was presented the "Ally for Equality Award," and Lee Daniels, producer and director, Precious & Monsters Ball, was presented the "Visibility Award." Eric Stonestreet, Jesse Tyler Ferguson & Sofia Vergara also appeared to present "Salute to ABC's Emmy award-winning TV show "Modern Family"".

Shannon L. Leonhard, PNC Business Banker, Lancaster, recently joined chamber board.

Member News

Russell A. Boggs, camber president, announced that Shannon L. Leonhard, PNC Business Banker, Lancaster, has joined the chamber's board of directors. Shannon has been with PNC since September 2006. Along with her work in the chamber, she is also vice president of PNC Bank's LGBTA Affinity Group based in Phila. This group dedicates it's time not only with inclusion education within PNC Bank, it also is working on outreach to the lgbt communityby, aomg other activities, co-sponsoring "Out for Work Conference," Washington, DC. Leonard was also recently appointed to the Business Professional's Advisory Board of the Harrisburg branch, University of Phoenix. She is a 1995 Elizabethtown College graduate and lives in Reading.

Mixers

November mixer is Nov. 3 at the Ephrata Performing Arts Center. The "Full Monty" performance ticket fees will be waived for chamber members. Get to this event early. The show starts at 8 p.m. The Dec. 9 mixer is at Jeffrey's Flowers and Home Accents, Mechanicsburg.

Chamber board representatives attended the Aug. 19 Dauphin County Diversity Network Forum. Boggs, and Central Voice publisher and editor Frank Pizzoli, attended a recent PPL diversity event in Allentown.

Leonhard and Hamill attended Estamos Unidos de Pennsylvania Gala Sept. 11. McClain represented the chamber Sept. 28 on a diversity panel hosted by the Human Resource Professionals of Central Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, an event coordinated by Ben Allatt, ARCUS.

Sept. 30 at THE CURVE, an lgbt-youth program of Planned Parenthood of Central PA, coordinated with the chamber a panel discussion about the world of work geared to local youth.

The Chamber will also was a proud sponsor of FAB again this year, with most of the board and many members of the chamber in attendance at the event.

Deborah Gable and Boggs attended the NGLCC National Business and Leadership Conference: "Out for Business" Nov. 17-20, Washington, DC.

Contact: www.cpglcc.org

Equality cont'd

this change in policy at PennDOT," said Amara S. Chaudhry, Esq., who initiated the dialogue in 2009 as legal director at Equality Pennsylvania with a series of letters to the agency, co-authored with legal intern Natalie Hrubos. Chaudhry, currently legal director at Mazzoni Center, said "We are deeply grateful to Ted Martin for his dedication and persistence on this, and to PennDOT for their willingness to develop a policy that is more inclusive of all Pennsylvanians."

"Equality Pennsylvania is committed to making sure that real policy change benefiting the entire lgbt community happens regularly, so this victory - so long in coming - is an especially satisfying one," said board president, Brian Sims. "These victories change people's lives, and that's really what our advocacy role is all about."

Info: www.equalitypa.org

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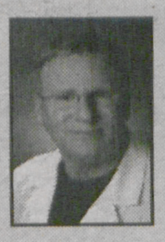

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HERSHEY THEATRE

Experience Hendrix Tour
Nov. 9, 8 p.m.
Experience Hendrix, the concert tour, features artists performing music associated with the legacy of Jimi Hendrix and includes Kenny Wayne Shepherd, Susan Tedeschi, Robert Randolph, Jonny Lang, Steve Vai, Los Lobos' David Hidalgo and Cesar Rosas, Eric Johnson, Ernie Isley, Living Colour, Chris Layton of Stevie Ray Vaughan and Double Trouble and The Slide Brothers a/k/a Chuck and Darick Campbell of Sacred Steel.
Tickets $60, $50, $40, $25
717-534-3405
1-800-745-3000
HersheyTheatre.com.

WHITAKER CENTER

A Rockapella Holiday
Dec., 16
Sunoco Performance Theater, 7:30 p.m.
Known as the new flavor of contemporary pop music, Rockapella's widespread appeal has built legions of fans throughout the United States and across the globe. According to USA TODAY, "Some say the best musical instrument of all is the human voice, if you've seen Rockapella you know that's the truth." Since 2003, the group has criss-crossed the country with their annual tour of A Rockapella Holiday.
Tickets are $35, $29.50

STRAND CAPITOL

Boyz II Men
Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m.
Strand Theatre
In it's 20th anniversary year, Boyz II Men still packs venues and sell millions of albums. Best known for emotional ballads and complex, intricate a capella harmonies, Boyz II Men is the most successful R&B male vocal group of all time, having sold more than 60 million albums worldwide.
Tickets: $35, $45, $55
Strandcapitol.org

Christmas with John Tesh
Dec. 14, 7:30 p.m.
Strand Theatre

John Tesh and his band of 4 merry makers have created a performance you'll talk about for years to come. Wrapped up under the Tesh tree you'll find traditional carols "ramped up" to get your toes tapping in your seat, and some of your favorite carols arranged with a nostalgic Big Band feel. John's remarkable version of We Three Kings will stay in your head throughout the 12 days of Christmas!
Tickets: $34, $44, $54
Strandcapitol.org

Anthony Bourdain at Hershey Theatre

Chef and author of Kitchen Confidential, Anthony Bourdain is best known for traveling the globe on his stomach, daringly consuming some of the world's most exotic dishes on his hit Travel Channel TV show Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations.

Once known as the bad boy of cooking, Bourdain is settling into an only slightly more dignified position as a professional gadfly, bête noir, advocate, social critic and pork enthusiast. He is unsparing of those things he hates, as he is evangelical about his passions.

On Wednesday, November 10, at 7:30 p.m., Bourdain is coming to speak, entertain and surprise fans at Hershey Theatre. Tickets go on sale Monday, August 30 at 10:00 a.m.

As executive chef at New York's famed bistro Les Halles, Bourdain is the author of the best selling Kitchen Confidential: Adventures in the Culinary Underbelly, a candid, hysterical, and sometimes shocking portrait of life in restaurant kitchens that has been translated into over 28 languages. His book, A Cook's Tour, published in conjunction with his series on the Food Network, was also a best seller in the US and the UK.

His other books are Anthony Bourdain's Les Halles Cookbook, The Nasty Bits and No Reservations: Around the World on an Empty Stomach, an illustrated journal of Bourdain's travels. His latest New York Times best seller, Medium Raw: A Bloody Valentine to the World of Food and the People Who Cook, is an insiders perspective on the changes in the restaurant business – from Bourdain's bad old days to the present.

A contributing authority for Food Arts magazine, his work has appeared in The New Yorker, The New York Times and Gourmet. He has shared his insights about team building and crisis management with the Harvard Business Review. He has also been profiled by CBS Sunday Morning and Nightline and appeared on The Late Show with David Letterman.

No Reservations, widely popular all over the world, has won an Emmy Award for cinematography and is currently in its sixth season.

Tickets: $150 (VIP Packages), $60.00, $48.00 and $38.00 (processing fees apply) and are available at Hershey Theatre Box Office. They can be charged by phone at 717-534-3405 or 1-800-745-3000, at all Ticketmaster locations, and online at Ticketmaster.com and HersheyTheatre.com.

Garrison Keillor to Visit Hershey Theatre

Minnesota-born and raised, Garrison Keillor is the living embodiment of the Midwestern spirit. Each week, he shares his steady thoughtfulness, old-fashioned values, traditional songs, and dry humor through his legendary, critically acclaimed radio show A Prairie Home Companion. He'll visit Hershey Theatre Nov. 16, 8 p.m.

Keillor has received numerous awards for his extensive repertoire, including a Grammy Award for his recording of Lake Wobegon Days. He has also received two Cable ACE Awards and a George Foster Peabody Award. In 1994, he was inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame at Chicago's Museum of Broadcast Communications.

With Philip Brunelle, he has performed with many orchestras, including the Chicago, Milwaukee, San Francisco, Pittsburgh, Minnesota, Dallas, and National symphonies. He has performed on his own in one-man shows across the country and on tour broadcasts of A Prairie Home Companion. His shows are undoubtedly sell-out events, as the popularity of Lake Wobegon and A Prairie Home Companion continues

to grow around the country, as audiences of all ages become exposed to this Midwestern sensation.

Tickets for this show are $65.00, $55.00, $45.00 and $33.75 – 4 pack only (processing fees apply to all price levels) and are available at Hershey Theatre Box Office. They can be charged by phone at 717-534-3405 or 1-800-745-3000, at all Ticketmaster locations, and online at Ticketmaster.com and HersheyTheatre.com.

York Little Theatre New Season Announced

York Little Theatre announces 2010-11 Season that features character studies, satires, children's stories, blockbuster musicals, adventure, suspense, and powerful, edgy pieces.

The schedule for the 2010-11 season includes the popular musical Dreamcoat. When the greatest detective finds himself under house arrest, he turns to a gang of street urchins to solve his mysteries. Andrew Lloyd Webber's beloved musical, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat runs December 3 – 19 and tells the biblical story of Joseph, favorite son of Jacob, who is sold into slavery by eleven jealous brothers.

YLT rings in the New Year with the first of its Studio Series of plays, The Shape of Things, a drama by Neil LaBute. It is the story of Evelyn, an iconic artist, who pushes artistic license to the limits as she molds her new boyfriend into a more confident and attractive man. It runs January 14 – 21.

February 11 – 21, YLT presents The Top Secret Princess Detective Agency, a Children's Series production which asks the question, "who do you call to protect the kingdom when Snow White is asleep, Rapunzel is stuck in the tower and Cinderella can't decide which shoes to wear?" The answer is "their younger sisters, of course!"

Blood Brothers, a musical by Willy Russel, next in the Studio Series, runs March 18 – 27. It tells the story of fraternal twins split at birth but who are drawn together throughout their lives. Michael Frayn's hilarious comedy, Noises Off, runs April 29 – May 8. It's the story of an acting troupe whose personal dramas supersede those on stage and real life becomes more of a farce than any playwright could conceive.

Frederick Knott's classic thriller, Wait Until Dark, runs May 27 – June 5. It is the story of a blind woman fighting for her life, alone in her apartment, against a gang of ruthless criminals led by a violent psychotic.

The Adventures of Zorro runs June 24 – July 3, and is the classic, swashbuckling adventure of Zorro, the masked bandit who vows to avenge the helpless and punish the cruel. The 2011 Season closes with the hit musical, Rent, by Jonathan Larson, which runs July 29 – August 14 and is about a group of disjointed young artists who struggle to survive and create under the shadows of capitalism, prejudice and the spread of AIDS.
Tickets: 717-854-5715, www.ylt.org.

Winter Thrills and Chills in New York City

By Winnie McCroy
Central Voice NYC Correspondent

Gay PA, your city cousins welcome you to enjoy all the best Gotham has to offer. If you're a fan of shopping, sightseeing, or Broadway shows, New York City is an ideal place to spend a winter weekend.

Whether you're traveling on a shoestring or cashing out your Christmas club account to paint the town red, you'll find plenty to do. Every year, on the week following Thanksgiving, thousands of people and the hottest pop stars gather in midtown for the Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony. Join the festivities at 6:45 p.m. on December 2 at Fifth Ave. and 50th St. For info call 212-632-3975.

While you're there, be sure to enjoy Manhattan's celebrated department store windows, decorated for the holidays. Many stores offer elaborate, free displays, including Saks Fifth Avenue, Barneys, Bergdorf Goodman, Bloomingdale's, Lord & Taylor, and of course, Macy's at Herald Square.

Enjoy their annual Miracle on 34th Street window displays, then head inside for the main attraction: Santaland!

Old and young alike will enjoy the elaborate displays of model trains, toy soldiers, and festive holiday decorations that flank the path to the man in the hat. It doesn't cost a cent to sit on Santa's lap and tell him what you want, but Macy's does provide color photos of the event for purchase when you're through, starting at $25. To avoid long lines, visit Santa early in the day, or during the week, when kids are still in school. For info call 212-494-4495

Those who prefer Santa's nose to be as red as Rudolph's should join in the annual Santa Pub Crawl. Don a Santa or Mrs. Claus costume, and join hundreds of others as they travel through town spreading holiday cheer with something a bit stronger than cookies and milk. For info visit www.spcnyc.com.

If nostalgia drives you to attach a pair of thin steel blades to your feet and hit a slippery surface, ice skating (and breakfast with Santa) is available in Rockefeller Center for those with deep pockets (www.therinkatrockcenter.com), and Central Park and Bryant Park for those a bit more frugal. (For info visit www.thepondatbryantpark.com/ www.wollmanskatingrink.com)

For some, a visit to New York City wouldn't be complete without catching at least one show on the Great White Way. Among the tried-and-true hits from Wicked to La Cage Aux Folles lie several holiday hits, including the limited engagement run of Elf: The Musical, playing through January 2 at the Al Hirschfeld Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. For Broadway tickets contact 212-239-6200 or Telecharge.com. For low prices on unsold tickets on the day of the show, visit the TKTS booth in Times Square at 47th Street and Broadway. Arrive at about 3 p.m. with cash in your pocket and some flexibility about which show you see, and you'll get some great deals.

Nostalgia packs a powerful punch, and from high-kicks to tin soldiers, The Radio City Christmas Spectacular starring The Rockettes delivers. Through December 30, snag tickets to this holiday standard at 866-858-0007 or radiocitychristmas.com

Fans of the inimitable Charles Busch, creator and star of such camp classics as Die, Mommie, Die! should see the off-Broadway hit, The Divine Sister, his "habit-forming" turn as a nun, playing at SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. For tickets, call 212-352-3101 or DivineSisterOnStage.com.

For more serious stuff, head to Tony Kushner's epic play, Angels in America. Catch "Part 1: Millennium Approaches," and "Part 2: Perestroika," directed by Michael Greif, at the Signature Theatre Company, 555 W. 42nd St. For tickets, call 212-244-PLAY, or signaturetheatre.org.

Fans of the bizarre and burlesque shouldn't miss the annual holiday extravaganza that is A Murray Little Christmas. Downtown nightlife impresario Murray Hill brings the charm of the Borsch Belt to Le Poisson Rouge on December 18 for his annual Yuletide celebration. This year's event features all of the nuts, fruitcakes, showgirls, and hi-balls for which New York City is renowned. For tickets visit http://mistershowbiz.com

The holidays wouldn't be complete without The Nutcracker, and New York City delivers with several acclaimed productions. Through January 2, The New York City Ballet stages George Balanchine's The Nutcracker at Lincoln Center. For tickets, call 212-721-6500 or nycballet.com/AXP-Nut.

The American Ballet Theatre will also stage dueling productions. Through December 19, see Mark Morris's '70s-style production, The Hard Nut. Right after that closes, catch the world premiere of The Nutcracker under the artistic direction of Kevin McKenzie, featuring Tchaikovsky's beloved score, through January 2 at BAM Howard Gilman Opera House at 30 Lafayette Avenue in Brooklyn. For tickets, call 718-636-4100 or visit ABT.org or BAM.org.

If you prefer your thrills more acrobatic, be sure to see the final season of Cirque du Soleil's Wintuk, the tale of a boy seeking snow in an imaginary winter wonderland. This family-friendly, otherworldly spectacle of acrobats, cyclists, roller bladers, and contortionists runs through January 2 at the Theater at Madison Square Garden, Seventh Ave. between 31st and 33rd Sts. For tickets, visit theateratmsg.com.

And, if only music will soothe your savage soul, The Metropolitan Museum will stage a full complement of Christmas concerts at A Met Christmas, set in their Medieval Sculpture Hall. This year's featured ensembles include Chanticleer, the San Francisco men's choir, and Anonymous 4, a female quartet. For info, visit www.metmuseum.org.

Handel's Messiah will also be staged in several different venues. On December 7 and 9, the St. Thomas Church at Fifth Avenue men and boys choir performs. For info, call 212-664-9360 or saintthomaschurch.com. The New York Philharmonic also stages Messiah, in Baroque interpretation, December 14-18 at Avery Fisher Hall. For info see http://nyphil.org.

For downtown musical thrills, be a part of a community concert at Phil Kline's Unsilent Night. On December 18 in Washington Square Park, a procession of boom-box wielding participants will wend their way through Greenwich Village playing cassettes and CDs of holiday songs, provided by Kline. Think of it as caroling for the modern set. For information, visit unsilentnight.com.

Love the idea of visiting the city, but not the prospect of driving through rush-hour traffic? Leave the car at home! Many bus lines will take you from Philly and other points in PA to the Big Apple for about ten bucks. Hit the web, pack your bag, and head to New York City for the holidays!

Harrisburg Symphony Announces Season: "Live Music in Real Time!"

The Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra, led by Maestro Stuart Malina, announced its 2010/11 season schedule. Entitled "Live Music in Real Time" the season features seven Masterworks concerts, four Capital BlueCross Pops Series, as well as five special events.

The season includes the annual "Stuart & Friends" concert; Picture Yourself in Paris…at the Moulin Rouge fundraising event; Harrisburg Symphony Youth Orchestra Holiday Spectacular; The Little Dragon, the first of a new family series; and the reuniting of the HSO and the Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet for the annual CPYB performances of George Balanchine's The NutcrackerTM performance at the Hershey Theatre.

Both the Masterworks and Capital BlueCross Pops series offer subscription packages. The Pops series offers a Full Season subscription to the four concerts and the Masterworks series is available in four packages including Full Season, "Flex 3" and "Flex 4" subscriptions.

In addition to a discount of up to 39% off single ticket prices, season subscribers enjoy reserved seating at the Forum and a subscription to the Fanfare newsletter. Season subscribers also qualify for the Symphony's very liberal exchange policy allowing them the opportunity to exchange tickets for a different performance date or return unused tickets for a tax credit. Ticket exchanges and returns must be handled by the Symphony Box Office at least 24 hours prior to the concert.

The Harrisburg Symphony is proud to continue "Get Hooked on the Classics,"

the specially priced new subscriber program launched during the 2007-08 season. The program offers a 50% discount off the regular subscription rate to anyone who has never subscribed to the Masterworks Full Season. There are seven seating areas to choose from, presenting options for every budget.

The "Sound Foundation" program also continues to introduce students to classical music. Students (kindergarten through 12th grade) accompanied by their parents or teachers are eligible to purchase the Full Masterworks series for only $27! The "Sound Foundation" program is a part of Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra's ongoing commitment to fostering a love of live classical music in our community's youth. This program is valid for sections 101 and 103 of the Forum.

Info: HarrisburgSymphony.org
717-545-5527

Whitaker Center Receives Awards

Whitaker Center recently received three honors based on fan and reader votes.

"We are thrilled to be spotlighted by readers of the Central Pennsylvania region," said Dr. Michael Hanes, Whitaker Center President and CEO. "Creating inspiring and memorable experiences for our guests is our number one priority."

The publications bestowing awards are Central Penn Parent – 2010 Family Favorite Awards for Best Cultural Spot/Museum; Harrisburg Magazine – 2010 Simply the Best as Performance Hall, Arts Attraction; and Central PA Magazine – 2010 Hot List for Children's Attraction.

Info: whitakercenter.org; 717/214-ARTS.

Susquehanna Chorale Features Choral Legends Page and Parker

The national award-winning Susquehanna Chorale is now offering season subscriptions for its 2010/11 concert series. Titled "An Experience of a Lifetime: Legendary People…Legendary Performances," the series includes the annual Youth Choral Festival on November 21; "A Candlelight Christmas" on Dec. 17, 18, and 19; and "Legends among Us," featuring guest appearances by Robert Page and Alice Parker, on May 21.

Season subscriptions, priced at $41 for all three concerts or $31 for any two, offer a substantial savings over individual tickets.

The intergenerational Youth Choral Festival presents performances by the Susquehanna Chorale and three groups that it sponsors as part of its educational mission: the Susquehanna Children's Choir, the Susquehanna Youth Chorale, and the Susquehanna Young Women's Chorale. From Baroque to be-bop and a lot in between, this concert will feature an exciting range of works that highlights the versatility of these young musicians. To conclude, all four choirs will combine for an exhilarating performance of Mack Wilberg's "Anthem of Peace".

Songs and stories of Christmases past will be presented at "A Candlelight Christmas". Guest artist Lois Harris' artistic readings of seasonal poems and stories will be interwoven with time-honored carols and songs, sung with Chorale's signature sound. In Susquehanna Chorale tradition, the concert will conclude with Malcolm Sargent's rich and tender arrangement of "Silent Night", sung by candlelight in the round.

"Legends among Us" presents area residents with the extraordinary opportunity to experience the music and conducting of two giants in the contemporary choral world. Conductors/composers Robert Page and Alice Parker will join the Chorale's Artistic Director, Founder, and Conductor, Linda L. Tedford in conducting the Susquehanna Chorale and Susquehanna Youth Chorale in an expansive program of their compositions. From melodious folk hymns to show-stopping Broadway tunes, this is music that transcends time. For further information about this extraordinary event, interview opportunities are available with Linda L. Tedford. Contact 717-533-7859 for details.

Tickets can be ordered online at www.messiah.edu/sc, by calling the Messiah College box office at (717) 691-6036, or by calling the Susquehanna Chorale office at 717-533-7859. Information is available online at www.susquehannachorale.org.

Ensemble-in-Residence at Messiah College, the 32-member Chorale can also be heard in February, when it will join the Harrisburg Symphony in La Bohème. The Susquehanna Children's Chorale also joins with the Harrisburg Symphony this season, in Mahler's Symphony #3 in April.

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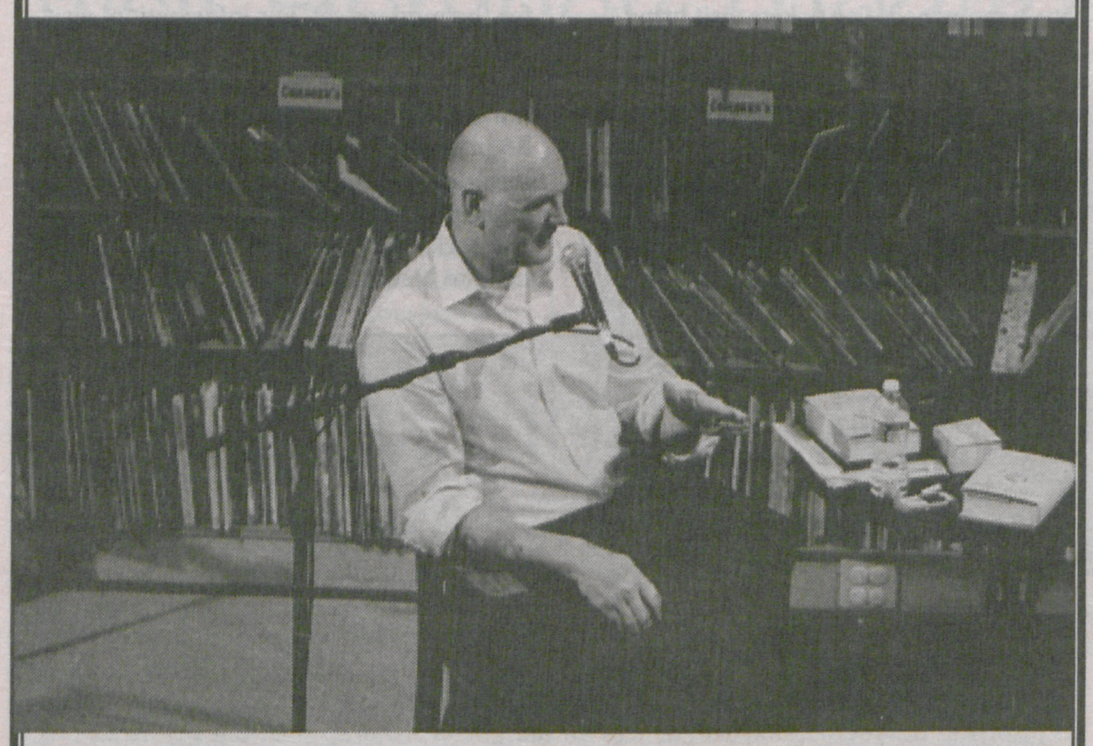
***Blue Orchard* novelist Jackson Taylor**, Nov.11, 7PM



HUGE HOLIDAY SALE BEGINS **BLACK FRIDAY**, 9-9
Free music, gallery receptions, & more, every 3rd Friday!

Intelligence Reports cont'd from pg 1

activities with professionalism and respect."

"I share the governor's disgust with the tracking and applaud his decision to cancel the contract," said Ted Martin, president, EqualityPA, listed as one of many sponsoring organizations for rallies supporting Lancaster county's human relations commission.

In the eye of the political storm swirling around in Lancaster County, activist Adanjesus Marin said "The Lancaster LGBT Organizing Committee and the Committee to Defend Civil Rights in Lancaster are outraged that our activities have been monitored by a private intelligence company that was presumably hired to protect Pennsylvanian's from terrorist activities."

Jeff Clouser, president of Pride Festival of Central PA from 2008 through 2010 and a member of the gay parade committee 2006 and 2007, said "I was never aware of the fact that our events were being watched and included on any list." Rendell walked in every parade except 2010 when he was tied up with passing a budget.

Richard Spangler, Reading Pride president, said "When I read the story my first reaction was that the decision to spend more on advertising our event this year really paid off. But seriously, the thought that we were being monitored or spied upon is quite scary. But I believe that the closer we come to full equality the more we will see of these types of actions. So maybe in the final analysis this is a sign that we are winning and they are scared."

The Pennsylvania American Civil Liberties Union jump into the fray.

"We've filed our own Right to Know (RTK) request for information on funding, contracts, and distribution, said Witold "Vic" Walczak, ACLU-PA legal director.

They've also posted Right to Know templates on their website (www.aclupa.org/rtk) so individuals and organizations that may have been targeted can request copies of relevant materials from the state police. They will provide assistance to anyone who encounters difficulties during the process.

The July 19 listing says:

PrideFest in Harrisburg, Celebration in Reading

On 24 July 2010, a LGBT (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender, "Gay pride") parade and subsequent festival, PrideFest, are scheduled in Harrisburg. On 18 July 2010, the Reading Pride Celebration is slated to be held in Centre Park, Reading. There are increasing indications of focused, anti-gay rhetoric and actions among White supremacists and right-wing militia supporters. Analysts and researchers are continuously monitoring sources for details on protest/counter-protest activities. (PAIB No. 105)

Source: Pennsylvania Actionable Intelligence Bulletin No. 113.

The July 23 listing says:

Rallies 'to Defend Lancaster County's Civil Rights'

The Committee to Defend Civil Rights in Lancaster, a coalition of civil action groups, is planning two "Unity Rallies" for 24 July and 29 July 2010. Both events, called to oppose "the elimination of the County's Human Relations Commission," are to be held in Binns Park in Lancaster County.

After the 29 July gathering in Binns Park, protesters "will march in unity to the public hearing on the elimination of Lancaster County's Human Relations Commission."

Speakers at the events include local politicians, church leaders, NAACP branch representatives and a member of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission.

Sponsoring organizations behind the rallies include: American Civil Liberties Union, Congregation Shaarei Shomayim, Equality PA, Crispus Attucks Community Center, Governor's Advisory Commission on Latino Affairs, Lancaster Coalition for Peace and Justice, Lancaster County Council of Churches, Lancaster City Human Relations Commission Board, Lancaster City Human Relations Commission, Lancaster County Coalition for Religious and Social Justice, Lancaster County Democratic Committee, Lancaster County Democratic Women's Association, Lancaster Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Organizing Committee, SEIU Healthcare Pennsylvania, Spanish American Civic Association, Theatre For Transformation, Vision of Hope MCC, YWCA of Lancaster.

Source: Pennsylvania Actionable Intelligence Bulletin No. 115

The reports are available online at www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/home land_ security/14251/pa_ intelligence_ bulletins/

The Midtown Scholar Bookstore staff has become part and parcel of most city and community art events. Info: www.midtownscholar.com.

Would You Participate?

cont'd from pg 1

the noise Mixner hears.

Cofounded by Oct. 11 national march co-organizers Robin McGehee and Kip Williams, the mostly 20-something group isn't afraid of direct action. "They parted ways in order to add a direct action component as a tactic to move the national lgbt civil rights movement forward," said GetEqual's managing director Heather Cronktor.

GetEqual.org's "Action Video" of street-blocking a San Francisco demonstration urging US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to move ENDA legislation (Employment Non-discrimination Act) can be seen at HYPERLINK "http://www.thecentralvoice.ning.com" www.thecentralvoice.ning.com. The group said Pelosi is "blocking legislation that protects lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender workers from workplace discrimination." ENDA is a pending Congressional bill first introduced in 1994 to prohibit workplace discrimination against homosexuality, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Following the Pelosi demonstration, GetEqual and Join the Impact-Chicago held a non-violent, civilly disobedient "flash mob" targeting Illinois congressman Rep. Daniel Lipinski. They called on Lipinski "to show leadership and demand that Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi - who he supported for that position - fulfill her promise to call for a House vote on ENDA this year.

In Philadelphia, three activists staged a six hour sit-in outside of Pa. Congressman Chris Carney's office (D-10th Dist.) calling on him to support ENDA. A Carney spokesperson confirmed that he voted for ENDA in 2007 but McGehee said Carney's staff have indicated he may be leaning toward a "no" vote in the future. Carney voted against hate crimes legislation and DADT repeal.

In another recent action, the activist group rallied about 20 people to the White House in support of DADT repeal. They also took action in Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid's home state. "GetEqual's action drew attention to the DADT issue. Their arrests and blocking of traffic in Las Vegas helped a great deal in focusing attention on Sen. Reid's inaction," Mixner said. The US Senate defeated DADT when a national defense budget that contained repeal language failed. During the debate, activists stood up in the middle of the hearing room to demand Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) immediately end his threat to filibuster debate.

GetEqual.org's "Action Video" of San Francisco street-blocking available at thecentralvoice.ning.com.

Locally, Zack Ford says differences in strategy throughout the lgbt movement are subtle and complex. Like any demographic, especially one as broad and hybrid as gay people, not all issues are important to everyone. "There are some in the community who couldn't care less about issues like marriage equality," Ford says. "They see marriage as a heterosexual institution they want nothing to do with."

"GetEqual isn't so different from other lgbt civil rights organizations," Ford said. "My impression has been they're pushing ENDA passage and DADT repeal as their two biggest issues, which I think is fair. The benefits of marriage don't do you much good if you don't have a job."

Although issues may overlap with other organizations, GetEqual's focus on direct action sets them apart.

"That has been controversial, but mainly because I think we have a new generation of potential activists who simply do not understand direct action. They understand giving donations, corporate lobbying, and creating visibility, but they're not used to being empowered to stand up for change themselves," Ford said. GetEqual changes that, he noted, by creating transparency about where our elected leaders stand on our issues. "Rather than back room lobbying, GetEqual creates a very public accountability for the inaction of our supposed allies."

GetEqual rallied about 20 people to the White House fence in support of DADT repeal.

Photo by Geoff Millard

Does media visibility create the false impression of equality? Ford thinks "there is a public perception" that visibility equals equality.

For example, the Williams Institute for Sexual Orientation Law and Public Policy in a new study says that only 1/3rd of adults who have had same-sex sexual experiences identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual. While 3% of adults identify as lgb, an additional 6% identify as heterosexual but say that they have had same-sex sexual partners since age 18. "Given that nearly half of Americans still believe that homosexual relationships are morally wrong, it is not surprising to find ambiguity between how people behave sexually and how they identify their sexual orientation," said study author Dr. Gary Gates.

Ford said "The popularity of shows like Glee and Modern Family create illusions that everyone has gay people in their lives. That all those gay people are just peachy, a continuation of the Will & Grace syndrome: All the gays are white, affluent, just living silly lives like the rest of us. This perception ignores transgender people in general, who face the most overt injustice and discrimination. The perception ignores the reality that outside of 'gay Mecca's' like New York, D.C., San Francisco, and L.A., gay lives are till pretty tough.

"Here in Pennsylvania, I can be denied housing, employment, and any sort of civil security for my relationship all because of my sexual orientation. That is not equality; that is still a culture of fear. Nobody reports that half of homeless youth are lgbt or that elderly lesbian couples are twice as likely to be living in poverty as their heterosexual counterparts. These are facts, but they don't fit the rosy portrait of gay life that the media likes to paint," Ford said.

Although stories about injustices are out there Ford thinks mainstream media is eager to ignore them, preferring to milk the provocative nature of gay issues. "It's always about 'giving both sides equal time,' and you see MSNBC talking to anti-gay Tony Perkins, CNN talking to anti-gay Exodus International, or FOX News completely ignoring conservative Ken Mehlman's coming out." The two sides aren't equal, Ford said. "One side has facts while the other has only ideology. Conflict gets better ratings than accountability, so we just keep hearing 'both sides,' which diminishes the real pain and injury of persistent discrimination."

AIDS not over

cont'd from pg 1

This year's luncheon is Dec. 2, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., West Shore Country Club, Camp Hill. Tickets are $50.

Lead sponsor for this year's luncheon is Capital BlueCross which has been a lead sponsor since inception of the luncheon in 2005. "The important work that the AIDS Fund of South Central Pennsylvania provides to our community is significant. Honoring an individual and corporate champion that is committed to raising awareness of the epidemic plays an important role in allowing the Fund to continue to raise money to support regional HIV/AIDS advocacy, prevention, education and support services, and" said David Skerpon, vice president, corporate communications.

This year's organizational honoree is Pennsylvania Medical Society recognized through the continuous work of Barbara Layne, editor of the society's Counter Details publication. Layne was the first medical editor in the country from a statewide medical organization to recognize the importance of educating members about HIV. She produced the society's first HIV exclusive edition of Counter Details. Her groundbreaking efforts prompted an overwhelmingly positive response from clinicians who asked how they could help infected individuals.

Layne has continued to publish other HIV-specific publications on trends, emerging populations and clinical updates. The society's collaboration with the state departments of Public Welfare, Health and the Pennsylvania Mid-Atlantic AIDS Education and Training Center is nationally recognized as a model for educating an organization's members through proactive government and non-government partnerships.

This year's individual honoree is John Folby, who has lead a distinguished 25-year career educating and managing programs for individuals with HIV. For many years Folby managed the state's Special Pharmaceutical Benefits Program, which provides life-saving medicines to people living with HIV. Folby is a passionate advocate who continues his work as a consultant and speaker.

Folby is a part-time faculty member and consultant of the Pennsylvania Mid-Atlantic AIDS Education and Training Center and president of John Folby Consulting, LLC, and a partner of Folby Hesselgrave and Keville specializing in HIV consumer input projects, emerging populations and creating proactive collaborations among non-traditional government and non-government entities.

Contact: The AIDS Fund of South Central PA, 717-236-5040, tfec.org.

Startling South Central PA HIV Stats:

- **The South Central PA region ranks 2nd in the Commonwealth in cases of HIV/AIDS.**
- **Of the 7 counties served by The AIDS Fund, 3 are in the top 10 high incidence counties across the state. The AIDS Fund serves Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lebanon, Perry, Lancaster and York counties.**
- **Approximately 29% of those living with HIV/AIDS in the region are injection drug users.**
- **The highest-risk populations for HIV/AIDS are heterosexual women, youth aged 13-24, injection drug users, and men who have sex with men (MSM). Communities of color, specifically African Americans and Hispanics, have disproportionately higher rates of HIV/AIDS.**
- **Nationally, African Americans accounted for over half (51%) of the estimated number of HIV/AIDS diagnoses made during 2007, followed by whites (29%) and Hispanic/Latinos (18%).**
- **Nationally, persons aged 40-49 accounted for the largest proportion of newly diagnosed HIV/AIDS cases (27%). Persons aged 30-39 were the second largest proportion (26%), followed closely by persons aged 20-29 (25%).**

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2007) and PA Dept. of Health (2009)

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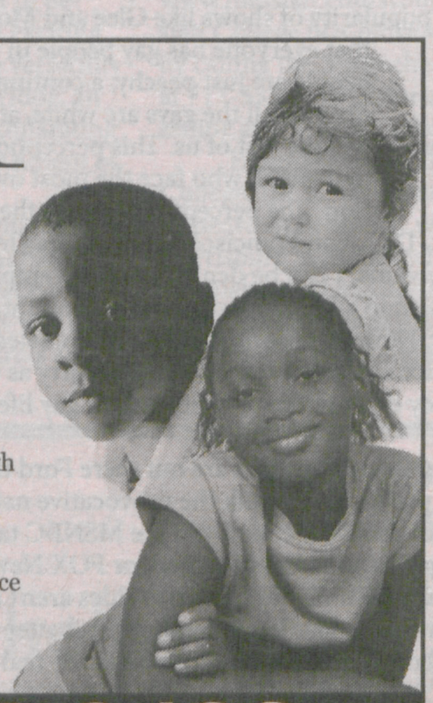

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Over the years, significant areas of Harrisburg and surrounding communities have been featured. From small pre-Civil War row houses to the mansions of Harrisburg's Front Street, the HHA tour allows visitors to get a real sense of the capital city's architecture and social fabric. "The city architecture and social fabric are the very qualities HHA strives to preserve," John Campbell, executive director. "Many current city residents decided to move into the city because of insights gained on a tour," He said. *Tickets: $20, info@historicharrisburg.com.*

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